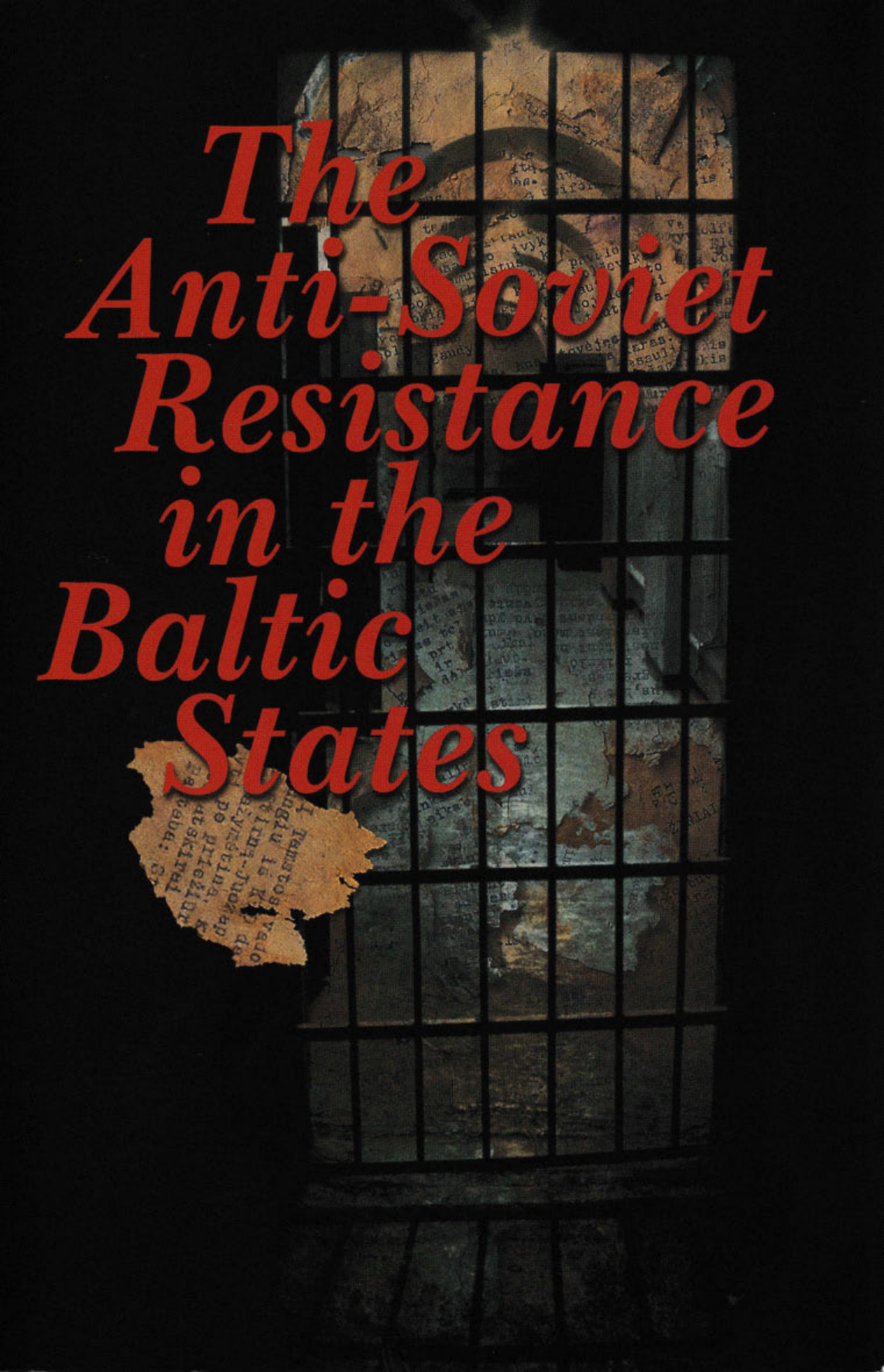
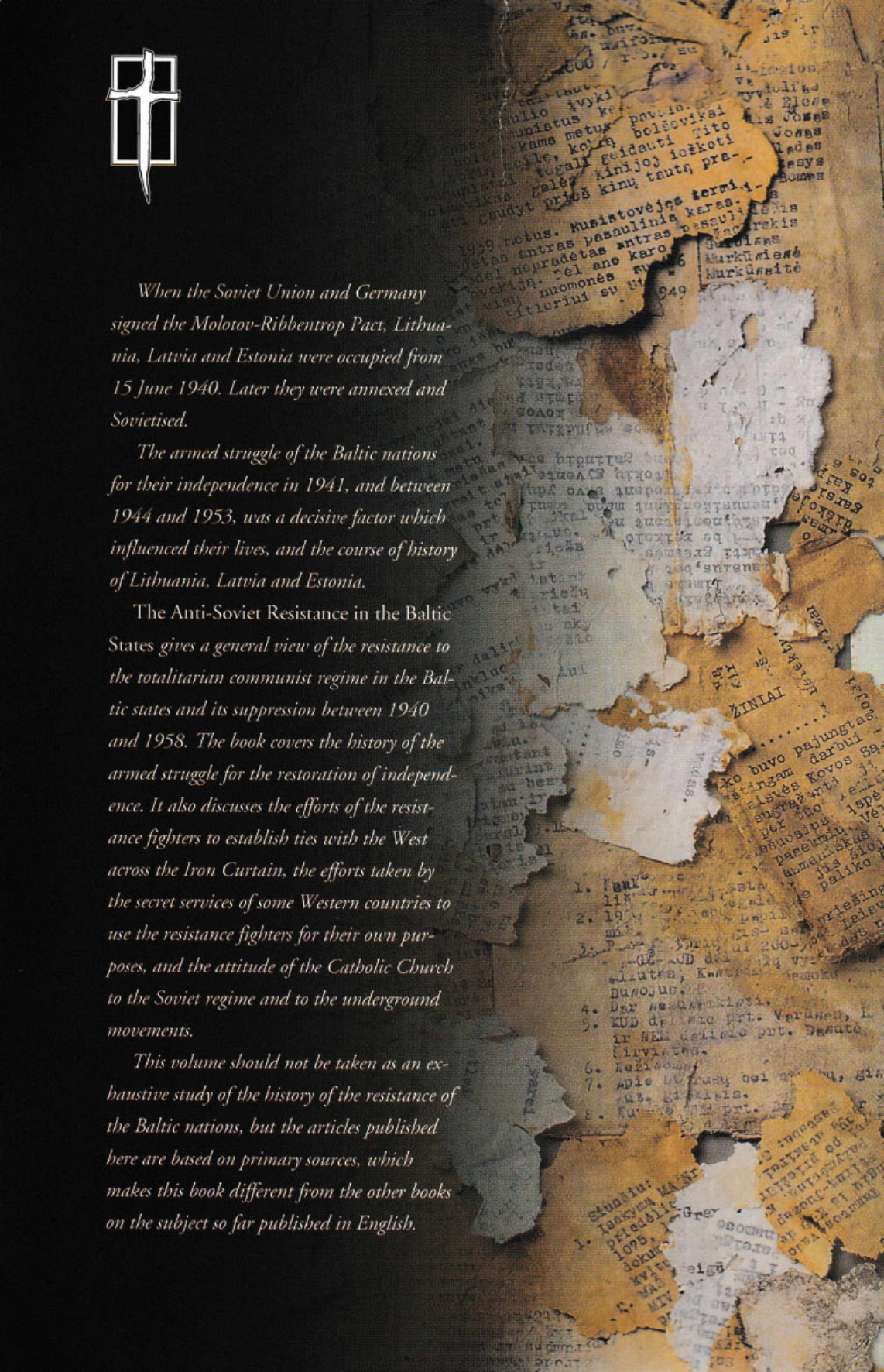
The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States





When the Soviet Union and Germany signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were occupied from 15 June 1940. Later they were annexed and Sovietised.

The armed struggle of the Baltic nations for their independence in 1941, and between 1944 and 1953, was a decisive factor which influenced their lives, and the course of history of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States *gives a general view of the resistance to the totalitarian communist regime in the Baltic states and its suppression between 1940 and 1958. The book covers the history of the armed struggle for the restoration of independence. It also discusses the efforts of the resistance fighters to establish ties with the West across the Iron Curtain, the efforts taken by the secret services of some Western countries to use the resistance fighters for their own purposes, and the attitude of the Catholic Church to the Soviet regime and to the underground movements.*

This volume should not be taken as an exhaustive study of the history of the resistance of the Baltic nations, but the articles published here are based on primary sources, which makes this book different from the other books on the subject so far published in English.

PRIVALOMAS
EGZ.
LNB

The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States

GENOCIDE AND RESISTANCE RESEARCH CENTRE OF LITHUANIA

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General Editor
ARVYDAS ANUŠAUSKAS

Language Editors
ZUZANA ŠIUŠAITĖ,
JOSEPH EVERATT

Design
VAIDA GASIŪNAITĖ

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PREFACE

The fate of the independent Baltic states was determined on 23 August 1939 when the Soviet Union and Germany signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were occupied from 15 June 1940. Later they were annexed and Sovietised.

After undergoing the terror and mass deportations of the first years of the communist dictatorship, the Baltic nations strove to restore their independent states. Due to the geopolitical situation at that time, the independence movements in the Baltic states looked upon the Soviet Union as an enemy.

The independence movements in the western part of the Soviet Union, i.e. in the areas covered by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, organised an armed resistance against the Soviet army in 1941 and between 1944 and 1953.

The armed struggle of the Baltic nations for their independence during that period was a decisive factor which influenced their lives and the course of history in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

The first books on the history of the Baltic states after the Second World War were published in English abroad: Lithuania Under the Soviets *by V.S. Vardys (New York, 1965);* Opposition to Soviet Rule in Lithuania 1945–1980 *by T. Remeikis (Chicago, 1980);* The Baltic States: Years of Dependence 1940–1980 *by R.J. Misiūnas and R. Taagepera (Los Angeles, 1983).*

The history of the resistance of the Baltic nations to the Soviet occupation has never been fully researched and has up to now only been based on a few biased sources. Information about the armed resistance was culled from underground documents which reached researchers abroad, highly tendentious Soviet publications and from rumours.

The objective of The Anti-Soviet Resistance in the Baltic States *is to give a general view of the resistance to the totalitarian communist regime in the Baltic states. The book covers the history of the armed struggle for the restoration of independence. It also discusses the efforts of the resistance fighters to establish ties with the West across the Iron Curtain; the efforts taken by the secret services of some Western countries to use the resistance fighters for their own purposes; and the attitude of the Catholic Church to the Soviet regime and to the underground movements.*

This volume should not be taken as an exhaustive study of the history of the resistance of the Baltic nations, but the articles published here are based on primary sources, which makes this book different from other books on the subject published in English.

We hope that this research, published for the first time, will fill a gap in the coverage of modern history, and that it will inspire interest in the resistance, which operated without any external support and which determined the later history of the Baltic states.

Dr Arvydas Anušauskas

Anti-Soviet Resistance in 1940 and 1941 and the Revolt of June 1941

VALENTINAS BRANDIŠAUSKAS

Lithuania lost its independence in the summer of 1940. The country was occupied and later annexed by its stronger neighbour, the USSR. The collapse of the state stimulated opposition, a search for ways to re-establish it. These efforts and the actual achievements – the plans for the re-establishment of the state drawn up by different resistance organisations, the revolt of June 1941, its course and the aims of its participants, the formation of central and local authorities, their objectives and duties – make up the subject of this paper.

An objective, that is, not bound by preconceived standpoints, approach to these issues has not so far been possible. Soviet historiography was influenced by its approach, based on socialist methods of evaluation, which conditioned certain ideological criteria in the selection of material and the resulting conclusions. Meanwhile, the majority of Lithuanian émigré writers found themselves hostages of an uncritical and romantic image of the events under discussion. This romantic approach was influenced by a number of factors. First, it rested on the evidence of the witnesses of these events, who did not want or were not able to see their mistakes. Their uncritical evaluation balanced with the Soviet approach to class that had taken root in Lithuania. Political conservativeness, the psychology of the juxtaposition of two extremes (from the point of view of historiography), determined the mythologisation of historical events. Thus, with rare exceptions, a certain style of writing about the 1940–1941 events in Lithuania settled in among émigrés. According to the historian Saulius Sužiedėlis: "It is normal and understandable. Under the long years of resistance and occupation there were many who thought that the nation needed a heroic and not a critical history."[1] We do not doubt that this, as well as the shortage of archive material,[2] explains why many issues have not been researched completely or, if they have, it was done in a very one-sided manner.

In recent works,[3] historians both in Lithuania and abroad have sometimes been helpless when faced with stereotypes and rhetoric, and surrendered to the temptation of writing a heroic history. There have been positive signs,

too: a critical and analytical approach has started taking shape, an international comparative analysis of events has appeared, and previously suppressed issues or issues discussed from one point of view, such as acts of revenge in the early days of the war, the motives of the pro-German movement and the anti-Semitic standpoint of some organisations, the spontaneous nature of the June revolt and the responsibility of the provisional government for its actions,[4] have been touched on.

LIBERATION ACTIVITIES ABROAD

Even for an experienced politician, the events of the summer of 1940 were not as clear then as they are now. For a while their meaning was masked by the formation of the People's Government, which initially did not include a single communist. More clarity emerged after the publication of the law on the elections to the People's Seimas. Since there were no alternative candidates, only the representatives of the Lithuanian People's Union stood, it was not at all difficult to predict the results of these elections and the composition of the future Seimas. In its first session, apart from other issues, the People's Seimas discussed the possibility of Lithuania's inclusion into the USSR. "The Declaration of Lithuania's Entering the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics" was approved unanimously. The diplomatic representatives of Lithuania abroad were the first to unmask the anti-democratic, anti-constitutional and anti-national nature of this action in protest notes to the governments of Lithuania and of foreign countries. They concerned the Red Army, which had occupied Lithuania, the anti-democratic elections, and so on. A new wave of protests arose after the admission of Lithuania to the USSR. On 3 August, the envoy to the USA, Povilas Žadeikis, wrote to the secretary of state, C. Hull: "According to the available information, on 3 August 1940 the Supreme Soviet of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics took action to incorporate the Republic of Lithuania into the Soviet Union, thus creating conditions under which the Lithuanian nation was, at least temporarily, deprived of its independence and the opportunity to enjoy its sovereign rights ..."[5] Protests were made against the Seimas resolution of 21 July to join the USSR for being passed by an unlawfully elected Seimas, against the unprovoked aggression and the unlawful incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR.

Although, de facto, Lithuania as a state had disappeared from the map of

Europe, de jure, the annexation was not recognised by the majority of Western countries. Here we can discern the effects of the efforts of the Lithuanian diplomatic service abroad. Initiatives for the liberation of Lithuania were taken by various organisations abroad. In August 1940, Lithuanian Catholics in the USA formed the Council for the Liberation of Lithuania,[6] and the Council of Canadian Lithuanians was formed in Toronto. A group for the liberation of Lithuania was organised in Argentina the same year.[7]

The most activity took place in Europe: in Italy, Switzerland and Germany. This was determined by geographical proximity, the work of the diplomats, the large number of Lithuanian refugees involved in politics and, with the approaching war between Germany and the USSR, the faith in Germany's liberating mission.

At a meeting of diplomats in Rome on 19 September 1940, hosted by the head of the Lithuanian diplomatic service, Stasys Lozoraitis, the Lietuvos tautinis komitetas (LTK, Lithuanian National Committee) was formed. Ernestas Galvanauskas, the former prime minister and minister of foreign affairs and finance, was elected chairman; Lozoraitis, the vice-chairman. The declaration speaks of the objectives of the LTK. It says that the purpose of the LTK was "to coordinate the efforts of all Lithuanians which are directed towards this aim [the liberation of Lithuania – V.B.], to defend and represent the interests of Lithuania and, during the occupation of Lithuania, to take care of all other interests of the Lithuanian nation and state".[8] Furthermore, if a government abroad was not formed, the LTK reserved the role of government in exile. This is confirmed by the planned appeal to the former president, Antanas Smetona.[9] He was requested "to appoint the chairman of the future Lithuanian National Committee to be prime minister, authorising him to perform the duties of the P(resident) of the R(epublic)."[10]

And yet, the LTK did not become an active organisation. It never again met in corpore. This could be explained by several reasons. The first, according to Edvardas Turauskas, was of a purely practical nature: the members of the committee lived in different countries – Germany (Galvanauskas and Kazys Škirpa), Italy (Lozoraitis) and Switzerland (Turauskas) – and seldom left these countries. The temperaments of the diplomats differed, too (from the dynamic Škirpa to the phlegmatic Turauskas and Lozoraitis). However, the most important reason was most probably "the difference in political views and evaluation of

the situation":[11] if Škirpa took a pro-German position, Lozoraitis and Turauskas were of a more pro-British orientation. Under these conditions it was hard to expect the LTK to take an initiative. Another detail should not be forgotten: Škirpa paid considerably more attention to the organisation which at the time was being founded in Berlin, and which he himself headed. Taking into account his inclination towards authoritarian rule, this detail is significant.

The inauguration of the new organisation, the Lietuvių aktyvistų frontas (LAF, Lithuanian Activists' Front), took place in Škirpa's flat in Berlin on 17 November 1940. It was chaired by the chairman of the LTK, Galvanauskas. Twenty-eight participants signed the act of inauguration and expressed approval of the idea to "rally the active forces of the Lithuanian nation in the Lithuanian Activists' Front for the struggle for the liberation of Lithuania..."[12] Škirpa, the initiator, was invited to head the organisation. As can be seen from the proclamation of the bureau of political information of Lithuania in Berlin, in liberating Lithuania, moral support was expected from the LTK, while the LAF was to rally the nation for practical deeds for the struggle.[13]

The LAF was joined by people of diverse political views, from the social democrats to the radical rights, or voldemarininkai.[14] In spite of the broad political spectrum, its unifying idea of the re-establishment of an independent Lithuania was stronger than ideological differences. The struggle of party interests was postponed.

The LAF attempted to find a modus vivendi between private property and the rights of the state. The interests of the nation, the community, was given first place, and nationalism was emphasised; liberalism, as the ideology of the individual, was rejected, as were all attempts to divide the nation into political parties or hostile political camps. Some of its political standpoints could be approved of even today: the state as responsible for improving the people's well-being and promoting national culture, the separation of the state and the church, the development of administrative forms, etc.[15]

The Tautinio darbo apsauga (TDA, Protection of National Work), founded on 30 March 1941, was to become the basis of the LAF armed groups. The aim of the TDA, proclaimed in provisional regulations, was "to fight for the vital interests of the Lithuanian nation, and to guarantee the complete security of the Lithuanian Activists' Front in its activities".[16]

The leaders of the LAF connected its plans to Germany's march eastwards.

In his letter to Leonardas Šimutis, the chairman of the Council for the Liberation of Lithuania, of January 1941, Škirpa wrote that Germany alone could "liberate Lithuania from the Bolshevik occupation".[17] Strange as it may seem, Škirpa believed in the German slogan about the restructuring of post-war Europe: he imagined that the re-establishment of the statehood of Lithuania could be linked to these Nazi plans. Today it is hard to determine whether Škirpa was unable to discern the real aims of Germany, or whether he consciously overlooked the sceptical attitude of the German officials with whom he was in close contact towards his plans and those of the organisation he was in charge of. It is understandable that, from Berlin, the idea of Western democracies liberating Lithuania did not look realistic. However, it is hard to justify the dependence on one totalitarian state. Probably, it was formed by many years spent in Germany.[18] The pro-German stance of the former envoy manifested itself not only in his belief in Germany's liberating mission, but also in the declaration of some of the principles of National Socialist ideology (the cult of the leader, National Socialism, the elimination of Jews from the political and economic life of the nation) in the proclamations and programme documents of the organisation he headed.

FORMATION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ANTI-SOVIET UNDERGROUND IN LITHUANIA

The occupation and annexation of Lithuania triggered resistance inside the country. According to Adolfas Damušis, resistance was "a purely idealistic phenomenon, lacking in personal interest or aspirations to honour and, lastly, in the hope of the immediate achievement of freedom".[19] It arose spontaneously, embracing different levels of the population, in the first place young people. The resistance acquired different forms. Passive resistance – the boycott of political activities – was widespread. Dissemination of leaflets became a common activity. The number of proclamations increased during the elections to the Supreme Council of the USSR and on the eve of anniversaries of the October Revolution. The number of leaflets increased especially with the approach of 16 February.[20] In the first half of 1941 (until 15 May), 583 anti-Soviet proclamations of different kinds were found. Most of them were handwritten and reproduced by hectograph; the rest were printed.[21] The proclamations called for a free Lithuania and remonstrated against the communist

authorities; the population was encouraged to boycott the elections and not to pay taxes; the peasants were urged not to deliver crops to the state; and so on.

The emerging repressive Soviet apparatus paid much attention to each particular fact of this kind: considerable attention was paid to the unmasking and registering of former political figures and other potential opponents of the new order. Between 10 and 17 July 1940 alone, over 500 members of former political parties, organisations and societies were arrested.[22]

It is difficult to speak of an organised resistance. This is not so much because of the shortage and fragmentary nature of archive materials, as the controversial, frequently contradictory, information. Misleading and provocative reports about the underground are quite numerous. There are other problems as well: frequently dubious or insignificant facts have acquired great importance and taken a firm root in historiography.[23] Unfortunately, it is not always possible to determine the sources and causes of misleading information. Sometimes it can only be guessed who – the KGB interrogators or the accused, eyewitnesses or the authors of memoirs – distorted the facts. All of them could have had an interest, although for different reasons.

Our concern is in determining the breadth and the structure of the underground. Very often only very few members (in many cases, exclusively schoolchildren) belonged to an organisation; for conspiracy considerations their contacts were very limited. They often hid under resonant names like Lietuvos gynimo rinktinė (Team for the Defence of Lithuania), Lietuvos atstatymo frontas (Front for the Rebuilding of Lithuania), Pagalbos Lietuvai komitetas (Committee for Aid to Lithuania), Tėvynės patriotų sąjunga (Union of Homeland Patriots), Lietuvos apsaugos gvardija (Guard for the Protection of Lithuania) and Nepriklausomybės partija (Independence Party).[24]

More information has been found on the latter. Late in 1940 and early in 1941, handwritten leaflets printed by hectograph were distributed in the streets and in educational institutions in Kaunas. The slogans declared: "Long Live Independent Lithuania," "Down with Communist Terror," "Lithuania for Lithuanians," and so on. More than 50 such leaflets have been found. Security officials uncovered an organisation of pupils under the name of the Independence Party, and 26 members were arrested. Some of them were sentenced; the minors were released.[25] A number of organisations were founded in Žemaitija (Samogitia). Late in 1940, Antanas Kenstavičius founded an un-

derground group called the Fifth Column, in Mažeikiai. Members of this organisation maintained contacts with the underground in the districts of Telšiai, Tauragė, Šiauliai and Kaunas. However, the organisation was discovered, and action was taken against 31 people. It turned out that contacts were maintained with the LAF in Berlin,[26] and that the group received proclamations signed by the information bureau in Berlin.[27]

Late in 1940, an organisation called Activists was founded in the Kretinga district. Its secret groups were based on the "threefold" principle, that is, when one member of the group knows no more than two other members.[28]

There were several organisations based in Kaunas. A group of about 15 members was tracked down and liquidated late in May 1941. The fate of two of the arrested – Teofilis Knyva and Stasys Valkauskas – was tragic. When the war between Germany and the USSR broke out, they were deported from Kaunas and shot in Belarus on 26 June.[29] The exact name of the organisation remains obscure – sometimes it is Pagelbinė policija (Support Police), sometimes Lietuvos laisvanoriška armija (Voluntary Army of Lithuania).[30]

Anti-Soviet activities were most of all feared in the 29th Territorial Riflemen's Corps, formed out of the Lithuanian army. This fear was well founded: the military protested against taking the oath of allegiance and against the wearing of Red Army insignia. Senior officers were dissatisfied with their new social status and worse financial situation. Early in 1941, the NKVD commissar, Aleksandras Guzevičius, had to admit that "the political-moral state of the intellectuals, who are apolitical and have never felt any attraction to the Soviet regime, is, when all things are considered, better compared with the position and personal attitudes of the former officers".[31]

One of the most significant, from our point of view, of the underground organisations was founded in the army. Its significance is reflected in the biographical data of the arrested, of whom there were 16. Among them were six officers of the 179th Riflemen's Division (from junior lieutenant to major), three reservist officers, and the remaining seven were civilians. Five of them had higher education degrees, four incomplete higher education, six secondary education. One had only a certificate of primary education. The arrested were all between 26 and 49 years of age.[32]

Arrests of the members of this group started in April 1941. Eight were sentenced to the ultimate punishment, death by firing squad, which was carried out

in December 1941 in the city of Gorky in Russia.[33] The rest were sentenced to prison for from seven to 20 years, and one was released. The organisation began operating late in 1940. Major Vytautas Bulvičius began rallying like-minded people. He shared the leadership with Captain Juozas Kilius. Bulvičius was to maintain contact with the public, while Kilius, as second in command, was to "provide for and prepare people among the soldiers of the corps".[34] Several other officers were used for making contact with the army units based in Vilnius. Contacts were maintained with the LAF in Berlin, radio contact with foreign countries was established and possible action by separate regiments of the Lithuanian Corps against the Red Army once the war had started was discussed.

In the indictment, the members of the organisation were accused of maintaining ties with foreign countries through a radio station and couriers, preparing an armed coup against Soviet power, military and political spying for Germany, and the printing and dissemination of the counter-revolutionary newspaper *Laisvoji Lietuva* (Free Lithuania).[35] Although these charges, and the latter in particular, were exaggerated, this group, frequently called the Death Battalion of the Riflemen, was the most serious and the most significant anti-Soviet underground organisation.

It is obvious that underground organisations, although lacking a centralised leadership and a unified programme, did exist. With the approaching war between Germany and the USSR, the number of secret groups grew, and at the outbreak of the war the resistance movement developed into a revolt. And yet, we are inclined to think that both Soviet and Lithuanian émigré authors exaggerated the significance of the anti-Soviet underground, increasing considerably the number of participants,[36] to pursue their own aims: the former wanted to justify the repression, the latter to highlight the coercive nature of the political changes in the summer of 1940 and the universal disapproval of them.

THE REVOLT OF JUNE 1941

Preparations for the revolt began in 1940. The plans were drawn up at the LAF headquarters in Berlin. Having assumed the leadership, it attempted to give advice as to how to form branches of the organisation in Lithuania and expected reports and analyses of events from Lithuania. The Berlin activists prepared and, through messengers, sent instructions and directions discussing

the possibilities of the re-establishment of Lithuania's statehood and detailing the objectives of the revolt at the outbreak of the war. The Sovietisation of Lithuania, the arrests and deportations to Siberia that started in the night of 13–14 June 1941, acted as an important catalyst for the revolt. In 1940 and 1941 the mood in Lithuania was such that, according to the historian Vincas Trumpa: "it would have been ... harder to check the revolt than to prepare it, especially with the powerful Reich standing just across the border".[37] The publicist Bronys Raila was also right when he observed that: "since the re-establishment of independence, a sober politician and soldier had to learn to plan his strategy and tactics according to the existing relation of forces".[38]

Kaunas became the centre of the revolt. On 22 June the radio was taken over, and preparations for its protection and broadcasting began. From there, Leonas Prapuolenis, the representative of the LAF, read the declaration of the re-establishment of the state of Lithuania and announced the composition of the provisional government. The spontaneous Vietinės apsaugos štabas (VAŠ, Local Protection Authority) undertook to lead the partisans. It functioned until the provisional government formed its own organisations and appointed officials. However, it must be admitted that leading partisan groups was very complicated: the VAŠ headquarters was constantly moved, the rebels themselves did not know where it was, and it was very difficult to get in touch with because they did not have telephones. There were no contacts with the LAF or the government either.

The aims of separate platoons were very similar. According to Kazys Ambrozaitis, a participant in the revolt and a member of the LAF, his group was, first of all, to "protect shops and other property against looting, to repel attacks, to prevent the blowing up of bridges, to attempt to liberate prisoners ... The procurement of weapons, however, was the top priority."[39]

Fighting was especially stubborn in Šančiai, a suburb of Kaunas. Groups of rebels, from 200 to 300 men each, were formed in the Metalas and Drobė factories. In many cases people joined these groups on the spur of the moment, and young people were driven by the search for adventure. Spontaneity was a characteristic feature of the fighting in Kaunas between 23 and 25 June. Small groups of partisans, casually formed, did most of the fighting. Enthusiasm could not compensate for the shortage of experience and weapons. In Vilnius, the scale of the revolt was much smaller. The main reason was the

composition of the population – Lithuanians were in a minority here. The exposure of Major Bulvičius' underground group and the arrests of its members also had a certain impact. It was this group in particular which prepared the main plans for resistance against the Red Army.

Despite this, the action in Vilnius started in the evening of 23 June: the post office was taken first. On the next day guards were posted, the radio station was taken, and the national flag hoisted in the heart of the city on Gediminas Hill. Lithuanian soldiers joined the rebels in Vilnius and in other places where the 29th Territorial Riflemen's Corps were stationed.

The revolt spread throughout the country. Having heard the national anthem and the announcement about the formation of the provisional government on the radio, people started forming partisan groups; national flags were hoisted, former premises (usually empty by this time) of local authorities were taken over, and care was taken to acquire arms by disarming retreating lone Red Army soldiers. Documents show that most of the partisan platoons were formed shortly after the outbreak of the war. People who had not even heard of the underground or the activist front joined the resistance. To illustrate this point, here is a stenographic account of the events in Pušalotas (Panevėžys district): Having heard on the radio the national anthem in the morning of 23 June, national flags were hoisted. The post office and the railway station were soon taken over. Lieutenant Vladas Šimoliūnas undertook to organise a partisan platoon. In the evening of the same day, upon the arrival of a train from Panevėžys, the partisans arrested three armed policemen and four communists, thus acquiring some weapons. About 20 policemen arrived from Panevėžys on 24 June. They were met by 15 armed and 10 unarmed partisans, which was a real baptism of fire. Two partisans were killed during a skirmish on 25 June. On 26 June the Germans appeared in Pušalotas: people met them with flowers and tears of joy in their eyes.[40]

This short account of events in a small town is fairly typical and reflects events in other places.

It goes without saying that not everywhere was the activity of the partisans the same. There are many locations where their activity is not even mentioned, or where it started after the arrival of the Germans. According to Algirdas Julius Greimas, even in the industrial town of Šiauliai "there was no revolt at all", while the VAŠ, formed of partisans, only started operating there on 27

June,[41] after the Germans troops had taken over the city. In spite of the uneven distribution of partisans, the resistance was widespread. The city and district of Kaunas, the districts of Švenčionys, Mažeikiai and Panevėžys, the town and district of Ukmergė were especially active.

The partisan fighting is indirectly indicated by the number of partisans and rebels killed. So far it has been estimated that from 2,000 to 6,000 rebels were killed during the revolt, while their total numbers were between 90,000 and 131,000. However, the method of making these calculations is unclear, and the data varies. One thing is clear, though, that the numbers were exaggerated. It could have been influenced by several factors: data given by contemporaries and also by prominent political figures, the shortage of documents,[42] and political motives (there have been attempts to draw a direct relation between the number of casualties and the scale of the resistance). According to estimates by the writer of this piece, the number of rebels killed did not exceed 650, and the number of rebels throughout Lithuania was from 16,000 to 20,000. Yet even this data is not precise and final, and there are many reasons why errors were made.[43]

The tactics of the partisan platoons differed. It depended upon local conditions. There were common features as well. The organisation of platoons and the battles were spontaneous. Another feature was the lack of arms. The revolt can be called, with good reason, a revolt of young people. This is recognised by the direct participants in these events and confirmed by an analysis of the partisans' ages. Out of 22 partisan platoons active in the Utena district, the youngest was the platoon from Kimėnai village, the oldest the platoon from Andrioniškis village, the average age being 24.3 and 34.8 years respectively.[44]

In all descriptions of the fighting one feels the elevated mood, and joy, at the arrival of the Germans: old women brought them eggs and sausage, offered them milk, young girls presented flowers. The press wrote: "It is an unusually beautiful sight when the German soldiers and tanks are decked with flowers, the soldiers are fed, while they give sweets to children and cigarettes to adults. Lithuanian citizens! Assist the German army further in all possible ways, so that our woods and bushes are as soon as possible cleared of Jews, Bolsheviks and other elements alien to our country, as well as of Lithuanian traitors."[45] The belief that the Germans had brought independence to Lithuania did not subside between June and August. Eventually, the opinion

about the Germans would change. Two years later the underground press would write that the Germans "can only be seen off with flowers";[46] however, the belief in them during the first week of the war and even later, and the "psychology of flower throwing" were quite understandable.

The revolt in Kaunas lasted until 25 June; in the country the opposition to the retreating Red Army continued throughout the first week of the war, during the German march eastwards. The revolt was directed both against the retreating Red Army and, at the same time, against German interests, because the re-establishment of independence and the formation of the provisional government were declared. Attempts were made before the new occupation to take over the administration of Lithuania and to form local authorities.

FORMATION, FUNCTIONING AND LIQUIDATION OF CENTRAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The plans for the formation of a provisional government were prepared at LAF headquarters in Berlin. It was in Berlin that the government headed by Škirpa was formed and its composition declared on the first day of the war between Germany and the USSR. However, this government did not have a chance to carry out its duties, because in the morning of 23 June the rebel government was announced. Since Škirpa was forbidden to leave Berlin, Juozas Ambrazevičius was put in charge of the government.

The coalition government headed by the Christian Democrats announced its existence in the very first issue of the newspaper *Į laisvę* (To Freedom) on 24 June: "The provisional government for the restoration of Lithuania hereby declares that it re-establishes the free and independent state of Lithuania..."[47]

Re-establishing the order which existed before the occupation, the government tried to restore historical justice by returning private property and, simultaneously, to pursue a socially oriented policy. In a very short time the provisional government restored the administrative structure of Lithuania which existed before 15 June 1940, and organised the police. These activities, however, were seriously obstructed by the Nazi military authorities, and later by the civil administration.

Vilnius found itself in the zone of action of a different German army: since during the period of Nazi military rule the city was beyond the jurisdiction of the provisional government, a committee of citizens of the city and the region

was formed. Stasys Žakevičius, an associate professor at Vilnius University, was elected chairman, temporary administrators were appointed and the publication of the newspaper *Naujoji Lietuva* (New Lithuania) was started. The Nazi military authorities kept in close contact with the committee and its functions were very limited: only certain social and economic matters were put under its authority. During the first week of the war the members of the committee had to sign a promise "to assist with all their might the German nation in its fight with Europe's mortal enemy – Bolshevism", to abstain from raising any political issues during the war, and not to accept and carry out any instructions without prior co-ordination with the "respective authorities of the German army".[48]

During the revolt, local authority institutions started functioning again in the districts. According to regulations laid down by the provisional government, all former civil servants of the Republic of Lithuania had to return to their previous positions. Without any further instructions from above, former officials and rebels founded different committees, formed municipal institutions, and a police force. The institutions which were spontaneously re-established de facto were very often legitimised de jure, frequently with no changes whatsoever. In this way the partisans and activists contributed to the work of the re-establishment of the state of Lithuania under the provisional government and the LAF.

The fate of the provisional government and the committee of the city and district of Vilnius was determined after German civil administration was introduced. In our opinion, the military authorities did not take firm measures against the government, not because of their view of the idea of the autonomy of Lithuania but due to their narrow and specific functions: the military authorities did not plan to take over the administration of the country. On the other hand, the military authorities exerted control over the provisional government, declared German law, while the laws and decrees passed by the government were practically invalid. The last meeting of the provisional government took place on 5 August 1941. Although it suspended its work, it did not abandon its aim to re-establish Lithuania's independence. Ministers who refused to take up the position of general counsellor resigned. The committee survived longer, mainly because it did not claim political power. Following the order from the general commissar, Adrian von Renteln, the committee was suspended on 15 September of the same year.

In the process of the disarmament and restructuring of partisan and activist groups[49] when the Nazis took them over, and after the dissolution of the provisional government, the LAF felt the need to speak out against German rule. It criticised the suspension of the provisional government and restrictions on institutions of higher education, voiced its dissatisfaction at the ban on the national anthem, the lowering of the flag on Gediminas Hill, and so on.[50] The reaction to these complaints was instantaneous: under the general commissar's order of 26 September, the LAF itself was closed down and its property confiscated.[51] Only one organisation – the pro-Nazi Lithuanian Nationalist Party – continued its public activities, but not for long: in December 1941, the general commissar of Lithuania issued a decree on the dissolution of all parties. After the ban on the Lithuanian Nationalist Party, the work of legal organisations in Lithuania was over, and the underground anti-Nazi resistance commenced.

1 S. Sužiedėlis, *Penkiasdešimčiai metų praėjus: lietuvių tautos sukilimo ir laikinosios vyriausybės istorijos interpretacijų disonansai. Metmenys*, 1991 No 61, p. 150

2 This idea could be confirmed by the fact that in general Lithuanian émigrés discussed issues which demanded not factual knowledge, but firm value standpoints. The importance and meaning of the revolt of June 1941, and the stand and policy of certain resistance organisations and authorities towards the Jews attracted most attention.

3 It is practically impossible to indicate the precise date of the crisis of Soviet historiography. It should be noted that the process of the rethinking of history started with the democratic Sąjūdis movement.

4 *1941 metų sukilimo baltosios dėmės* (interview with S. Sužiedėlis). *Akiračiai*, 1991 No 9-10; 1992 No 1

5 Iš bolševistinės vergijos į naują Lietuvą. Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas (LYA), Criminal case No 12494/3. Envelope No 64a, l. 8-9

6 A. Kučas, *Amerikos lietuvių istorija*. Boston 1971, p. 552

7 V. Vaitiekūnas, *Lietuvos vadavimo organizacijos praeityje. Į laisvę*, 1982 No 92, pp. 35-36

8 *Tautiečiai ir tautietės* (Proclamation of the LTK). Library of the Academy of Sciences. Manuscript department (MACB RS). F. 222-1736, l. 1-2

9 Smetona left Lithuania for Germany on 15 June 1940. At the time of the meeting he lived in Bern, Switzerland.

10 Lietuvos pasiuntinių pasitarimo, įvykusių Romoje 1940 m. rugsėjo 19–25 d., protokolas (Edited by S. Senas). *Gimtasis kraštas*, 27 April – 3 May 1990

11 E. Turauskas, *Lietuvos nepriklausomybės netenkant*. Kaunas 1990, pp. 279-280

12 K. Škirpa, *Sukilimas Lietuvos suverenumui atstatyti*. Washington 1973, p. 94

13 Talka Lietuvai atstatyti. LYA, Criminal case No 12949/3. Envelope No 64a, l. 14

14 A radical rightist organisation

15 K. Škirpa, op cit, pp. 65-89

16 Tautinio darbo apsaugos laikinieji nuostatai. Lietuvos Centrinis Valstybės Archyvas (LCVA), F.R-1398, ap. 1, b. 1, l. 99-101

17 Škirpa's letter to L. Šimutis of 31 January 1941. MACB RS. F. 9-3105, l. 56

18 Škirpa started his diplomatic activities in Germany in 1927, and, except for a short break, worked there up to the occupation of Lithuania in 1940.

19 A. Damušis, *Laisvės kovų pirmasis veiksmas. Į laisvę*, 1961 No 25, p. 1

20 The Declaration of Independence was signed on 16 February 1918, and up to the occupation this day was celebrated as a national holiday marking the independence of Lithuania.

21 V. Brandišauskas, *Siekiai atkurti Lietuvos valsty-*

bingumą (06 1940 – 09 1941). Vilnius 1996, l. 46

22 Ibid, l. 46-47

23 For more on this, see: V. Brandišauskas, op cit, pp. 12-14, 47-49

24 A. Budreckis, *Lithuanian Resistance, 1940–1952. Lithuania 700 Years*. New York 1969, p. 317; Z. Ivinskis, *The Lithuanian Revolt against the Soviets in 1941*. *Lituanus*, 1966 No 2, pp. 7, 11-12; I. Vidžgiris, *Lietuvių pasipriešinimas okupantams. Į laisvę*, 1960 No 22, p. 3

25 Report of 28 May 1941 by the deputy commissar of the NKGB of the Lithuanian SSR, State Security Major Bykov, to State Security Major Ilyushin, the chairman of the 6th Department of the 3rd Office of the NKGB of the USSR. LYA. F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 5, l. 214-215

26 Special report of 23 May 1941 by P. Gladkov. LYA. F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 5, l. 170-179, 187

27 Minutes of the interrogation of A. Kenstavičius, of 3 May and 9 May 1941. Lietuvos visuomenės organisacijų archyvas (LVOA), F. 3377, ap. 55, b. 50, l. 21, 24-25

28 Minutes of the interrogation of J. Ramanauskas of 16 May 1941, and of P. Bortkevičius of 10 April 1941. LVOA, F. 3377, ap. 55, b. 50, l. 16, 30-31

29 Certificate. LYA, Criminal case No 15984/3, l. 68-69

30 Order for arrest by the NKGB of the Lithuanian SSR of 23 May 1941. LYA. Surveillance case No 15984/3, l. 28; minutes of the interrogation of A. Eidukevičienė of 29 May 1941. LYA. Criminal case No 15984, l. 257

31 Report prepared by A. Guzevičius in January 1941, *Apie moralinę-politinę buvusios Lietuvos armijos kariškių būklę teritorinio korpuso dalyse*. LVOA, F. 1771, ap. 2, f. 53, l. 59

32 Bill of indictment, 5 November 1941, at the NKVD of the Gorky region. LYA, Criminal case No 34229/3, t. 3, l. 457-459

33 Sentence of 28 November 1941 by the Moscow military region tribunal in Gorky and certificate about its execution. LYA, Criminal case No 34229/3, t. 3, l. 485-487

34 Minutes of the interrogation of J. Kilius of 15 June 1941. LYA, Criminal case No 34229/3, t. 1, l. 68-69

35 Bill of indictment, 5 November 1941, at the NKVD of the Gorky region. LYA, Criminal case No 34229/3, t. 3, l. 440-441

36 In historiography the number quoted fluctuates between 36,000 and 50,000; according to the author's estimates, it should be at least ten times less

37 V. Trumpa, *K. Škirpos "Sukilimą" paskaičius*. *Akiračiai*, 1976 No 4

38 B. Raila, *Kitokios Lietuvos ilgesys*. Vilnius 1993, p. 334

39 K. Ambrozaitis. *Aukos ir vilties dienos. Į laisvę*, 1956 No 10, pp. 28-29

40 A.D. kovų aprašymai. MACB, RS. F. 222–1756, l. 3-5

41 A.J. Greimas, *Apie 1941 metus Lietuvoje*. *Akiračiai*, 1992 No 6

42 These figures were originally supplied by researchers residing in the USA with no access to archives in Lithuania.

43 For more on this, see: V. Brandišauskas, op cit, pp. 15-16, 82-88

44 Lists of the partisans of the Utena region. LCVA, F. R-1652, ap. 1, b. 1, l. 1-6

45 *Lietuvos tauriejі piliečiai ir pilietės... Išlaisvintas panevėžietis*, 4 July 1941

46 *Dvejos skaudžios metinės. Nepriklausoma Lietuva*, 15 June 1943

47 *Atstatoma laisva Lietuva. Į laisvę*, 24 June 1941

48 Pledge. MACB RS. F. 165-167, l. 2

49 The disarmament and re-organisation of these platoons first began in Kaunas on 28 June, but was protracted, especially in the provinces.

50 Memorandum of the LAF of 15 September 1941 *Apie Lietuvos būklę, vokiečių civilinei valdžiai Lietuvoje pradėjus veikti*. LCVA, F. R-739, ap. 1, b. 1, l. 1-9

51 *Generalkomisaro Kaune parėdymas. Tėvynė*, 3 October 1941

The Partisan War in Lithuania from 1944 to1953

NIJOLĖ GAŠKAITĖ-ŽEMAITIENĖ

Although independence was declared on 11 March 1990, the archives of Soviet institutions did not become accessible to historians until the end of 1991. Until then, information about the armed resistance against the Soviet occupation, which lasted almost ten years, was based on hearsay, underground documents taken abroad, and the propaganda publications of the Soviet administration.

There are few surviving participants of the partisan war. Most died in the struggle for freedom, others spent years of torture in Soviet concentration camps, which turned out to be terminal for many of them.

Partisans collected and stored documents relating to the freedom struggle; however, many of these were buried in secret places and now are impossible to find or have deteriorated. At the end of 1947, the messengers Juozas Lukša and Kazimieras Pyplys succeeded in slipping across the Iron Curtain and reaching free Western countries. They took with them a stock of documents on the repressive measures of the occupying regime and the resistance of the partisans. In late 1948, this material was supplemented by another messenger, Jurgis Krikščiūnas, who reached Poland (unfortunately, he did not make it to the West and was killed in Poland in 1949). The widest worldwide coverage was given to the letter from Lithuanian Catholics to Pope Pius XII, carried abroad by Lukša and Pyplys, that was published in the press in Germany and Italy. Documentary material on the genocide of the Lithuanian population carried out by the Soviet Union, and on the armed resistance, was printed in 1948 in the bulletin of the Bendras demokratinis pasipriešinimo sąjūdis (BDPS, General Democratic Resistance Movement) delegation in Sweden. Lukša, who spent almost three years in Western Europe, wrote a book based on documents, *Partizanai už geležinės uždangos* (Partisans Behind the Iron Curtain) while preparing to return to his homeland. The book, in Lithuanian, was published in Chicago in 1950.

In 1959 the Central Committee (CC) of the Lithuanian Communist Party

formed a special editorial group of KGB staff and historians to commission publications and propaganda books on the partisan struggle. The aim of these publications was to conceal the fact of the occupation of Lithuania, and to present the armed resistance to the occupation as a social struggle between the classes or a civil war between various political groups within the country. These publications often included falsified information: partisans were slandered and defamed, labelled bandits and killers of innocent people. They attempted to conceal the fact that the majority of the population supported the ideals of the partisans. The first studies of the partisan war were published in exile, based on these scarce and biased sources. These were: *Vienų vieni* (All Alone) by J.Brazaitis-Sūduvis (Brooklyn, 1964); *Lithuania Under the Soviets* by V.S.Vardys (New York, 1965); *Opposition to Soviet Rule in Lithuania 1945–1980* by Thom Remeikis (Chicago, 1980); *Partizanų kovos Lietuvoje* (Struggle of the Partisans in Lithuania) by K.K. Girnius (Chicago, 1987), etc.

The first publications on the partisan war appeared in Lithuania in 1988, and in 1991 a periodical *Laisvės kovų archyvas* (LKA, Archive of the Struggle for Freedom) was launched. It includes the memoirs of surviving partisans, documents from partisans and NKVD-MGB[1] institutions, articles by historians, and other material. Books and diaries written by partisans themselves have been published in *Daugel krito sūnų* (Many Sons Have Fallen Dead) by A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas, 1991; *Dienoraščiai* (Diaries) by J. Lelešius-Grafas and L. Baliukevičius-Dzūkas, 1994, etc; as well as books highlighting the activities of partisans in particular regions of Lithuania. In 1996, a more extensive study of the partisan war appeared, *Lietuvos partizanai 1944–1953 m.* (Lithuanian Partisans in 1944–1953) by N. Gaškaitė, D. Kuodytė, A. Kašėta and B. Ulevičius, along with a two-volume collection of documents, *Laisvės kovos 1944–1953 m.* (Fighting for Freedom), and documents of the repressive institutions, *Lietuvos partizanų kovos ir jų slopinimas MVD-MGB dokumentuose 1944–1953 m.* (The Struggles of Lithuanian Partisans and their Suppression in MVD-MGB Documents), and a monograph about the genocide of the Lithuanian population, *Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas 1940–1958* (The Extermination of the Lithuanian Nation by the Soviets) by A. Anušauskas. In 1997, a popular book for the wider public and young people by N. Gaškaitė, *Pasipriešinimo istorija 1944–1953* (The History of the Resistance), appeared.

Partisan documents were published in the work *Nenugalėtoji Lietuva* (Lithuania Undefeated), compiled by A. Liekis (1995), *Partizanai apie pasaulį, politiką ir save* (Partisans about World, Politics and Themselves) etc.

Although the history of the partisan war and the main events in it have more or less been covered, studies of the experience gained by the nation in the years of severe repression and resistance against totalitarianism are insufficient. The war was not merely a question of disobeying the rule of the Soviet Union which occupied Lithuania. It was the underground existence of a legitimate military and political power, without any external support, which was doomed to failure.

According to the secret agreements between Ribbentrop and Molotov, the Red Army entered Lithuania on 15 June 1940. The government was replaced, and the highest state officials were persecuted. Voluntary accession to the Soviet Union was engineered by fixing the elections to a People's Seimas. The Lithuanian army was incorporated into the Red Army, the command was replaced and some senior officers were tortured. In the middle of June 1941, over 18,000 civilians (including 5,000 children) were deported to the north of the Soviet Union.[1]

Underground organisations started to appear. One of them, the Lietuvių aktyvistų frontas (LAF, Lithuanian Activist Front), organised a rebellion on 22 June 1941, when the war between Germany and the Soviet Union broke out. Without assistance from the German army, administrative institutions were taken over in Kaunas and the restoration of the independent state was declared. All over the country, rebel units took over the administration of the country and opposed Soviet garrisons and NKVD units that were killing prisoners and civilians. The occupying German administration, however, did not recognise the provisional Lithuanian government formed by the rebels and dissolved it after six weeks. Rebels were disarmed, parties and public organisations were abolished (the LAF among them).

During the Nazi occupation, many underground organisations were formed, in the hope of restoring the statehood of Lithuania. On 25 November 1943, after the unification of underground organisations with differing political views, the Vyriausiasis Lietuvos išlaisvinimo komitetas (VLIK, Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania) was established. The underground press urged a boycott of Nazi efforts to create a Lithuanian SS

battalion (the battalion was never formed), and, taking into account the international situation, various possibilities for the restoration of independence were discussed. More radical underground organisations, such as the Lietuvos laisvės armija (LLA, Lithuanian Liberation Army) planned armed resistance to the approaching Red Army in June 1941. There were two alternatives: to form a secret army, or, with the permission of the Germans, to attempt to create Lithuanian military units under the control of the German occupying government. In February 1944, after the failures on the Eastern Front and with the Red Army approaching, the Germans agreed to create a local Lithuanian corps, intended for action only within Lithuania. Some 30,000 men registered as volunteers with this unit, with the hope of getting weapons from the Germans and resisting the Red Army for the second time. The Germans, however, did not keep their promise and requested the total mobilisation of men, while they planned to send the corps to the front outside Lithuania after the reformation of its battalions. When these requests were rejected, the staff of the Local Corps was liquidated in May 1944: General Povilas Plechavičius and the officers were sent to Salaspilis concentration camp, a few dozen soldiers were executed and over 3,000 arrested, the rest escaped. Persecutions also affected the members of anti-Nazi organisations, the VLIK was disbanded, some of its members were arrested, the rest fled to the West.

Despite the tragic fate of the Local Corps in July 1944, as the Red Army was invading eastern Lithuania, in the western part of the country the Homeland Defence Corps was organised with the permission of the Germans. On 7 October 1944, the poorly armed units of the Homeland Defence Corps attempted to stop the advance of the Red Army in Žemaitija (west Lithuania) near Seda; however, they were defeated and scattered. The survivors helped to build fortifications under German command, and the majority of them crossed the front line individually and joined the partisan units being formed.

The most active organiser of partisan resistance to the Soviet occupation was the LLA. This organisation published a directive that equated abandoning Lithuania with desertion. It planned to divide the country into four regions, where units of armed partisans (called "hawks") were to operate with all possible support from the members of the organising sector, who lived legally. However, with the rapid advance of the Russian-German front across Lithuania, the formation of all LLA regional commands was not completed. A number

of directives and instructions were prepared to regulate partisan activities, and the possibilities to obtain weapons from the Germans were investigated in co-operation with other underground organisations.

In spite of that, the preparations for the partisan war were not concluded (the reasons for this were the German persecution of the anti-Nazi underground movement and the elimination of the Lithuanian government and military elite by the Soviets as early as 1940).

On 13 July 1944, the Red Army occupied Vilnius. A fortnight later the occupying government ordered conscription into the Red Army. In the first month, only 14 per cent of men obeyed the order. Special troops of the Soviet army were stationed in Lithuania: the 4th Riflemen's Division of the USSR NKVD (in late 1945 the 7th division was introduced), nine NKVD frontier regiments and NKVD rear defence regiments of four Red Army corps. NKVD Deputy Commissar Serov, who was sent to Lithuania, established the NKGB of the Lithuanian SSR on 15 July 1944 and undertook the coordination of the actions of these bodies and army units. Arrests included the members of the anti-Nazi resistance, participants in the rebellion of June 1941, soldiers of the Local Corps and Homeland Defence Corps, as well as those evading conscription into the occupying army. NKVD units rampaged all over Lithuania. They combed settlements. In an attempt to escape from this, people had hidden in the forests (in November 1944 over 33,000 men were in hiding).[2] In December NKVD troops carried out punitive operations across the entire country: they burned farmsteads, they used mortars to destroy buildings, shooting people or burning them alive. From 20 to 25 December 1944, around Christmas, in the districts of Alytus, Panevėžys and Raseiniai, 74 punitive operations were arranged and over 400 people were killed, most of them unarmed civilians.[3] In 1944 and 1945, 13,200 individuals were killed or tortured to death during interrogation; 108,000 men were conscripted into the Red Army (82,000 Lithuanians among them), over a half of them captured by force.[4]

Such cruel actions provoked the resistance into violence. Partisan units sprang up in all districts. Fear of the reprisals carried out by the occupying Soviet army cannot be considered the main reason for the armed resistance. The main argument that determined the choice to join partisan units was patriotism and the hope of restoring the independent state. Among the parti-

sans killed between 1951 and 1953, only eight per cent were threatened as former members of the Local or Homeland Defence Corps volunteers; 12 per cent were threatened by possible deportation; another 12 per cent by conscription into the Soviet army.[5]

The majority – 36 per cent of the victims – chose out of principle to join the resistance movement; and 32 per cent of the victims specified no reasons – that is, it could be explained by a certain kind of independent personality.

The hope of restoring a free and democratic Republic of Lithuania was linked with the end of the Second World War and the future peace conference. The partisans believed in the principles set out in the Atlantic Charter, and later, those in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, passed by the UNO on 5 December 1948, the Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, and other instruments of international law. A military conflict between the East and the West was expected with the beginning of the Cold War. The hope was nourished again and again by the increased state of confrontation between the Soviet Union and the free world: in 1948 and 1949, during the blockade of Berlin by Stalin, from 1950 to 1953 during the Korean War, etc. It was expected that, with a favourable international situation, like that in June 1941, Lithuania would succeed in regaining its independence. A centralised underground structure was created for this critical moment, which was supposed to mobilise men, ensure the defence of the country, organise provisional governing bodies and hold democratic parliamentary elections. Till then, efforts were made to obstruct the formation of the occupying governing bodies, opposition was organised to the elections which were supported by the Soviet army, compulsory conscription into the Red Army was resisted. Resistance was also directed against communist propaganda, the destruction of material assets and private property, compulsory collectivisation of farms, demolition of farmsteads and purges of the population. The Lithuanian partisan war can be divided into three periods, according to the strategy and tactics of the struggle and by the suppression methods used by the occupying forces: July 1944 to May 1946; May 1946 to November 1948; and November 1948 to May 1953. The first stage is characterised by the general rebellion, elements of territorial defence and positional warfare. As early as July 1944, small partisan detachments began to combine into larger units and to form partisan regions. In the first stage of the struggle, seven *apygarda* (regions) were formed (two others were formed later by splitting the largest regions):

Vyčio (December 1944 – January 1953)
Didžiosios Kovos (February 1945 – November 1950)
Žemaičių (March 1945 – August 1953)
Vytauto (August 1945 – December 1951)
Tauro (August 1945 – June 1952)
Dainavos (November 1945 – August 1952)
Kęstučio (September 1946 – June 1953)
Algimanto (May 1947 – November 1950)
Prisikėlimo (April 1948 – June 1952)

Each region consisted of two to five corps (a corps usually consisted of partisans from one area); areas were split into districts (three to eight rural districts) or parishes (two to four rural districts) and further into companies, detachments, platoons and squads. All larger units had a chain of command. A wider Organisational Sector Network provided partisans with material resources, printing equipment and medicine. They also distributed publications. Since the very first days they regulated their own activities by the statutes and regulations of the former regular Lithuanian army. Men joining partisan units took an oath, lists of duties were drawn up, in 1946 military uniforms and signs of identification and distinction were introduced. The partisans had a system of ranks, and the soldiers were trained.

From 1946 there were almost no irregulars left in hiding in the forests. In 1944, the occupying authorities realised that repressions would not reduce the number of partisans, and began to put out various calls "to the Lithuanian nation" encouraging those in hiding to register and return to a legal way of living. The family members of those who disobeyed were taken hostage and deported to Siberia after each call. As a result, some 43,800 individuals returned in 1944 and 1945 (85 per cent of them were avoiding conscription into the Red Army).[6] When they did they were required to surrender their weapons (although the majority of them never had any weapons) and to betray those still in hiding. According to an NKVD directive, they were recruited as agents, and those who refused were arrested. In 1945, 7,000 people who had surrendered were arrested, others were sent to join the Red Army.

In 1944 the authorities faced the problem of forming civil government: the partisans were assaulting smaller towns (17 towns were attacked in 1944; 30 altogether in 1944 and 1945), destroying the government institutions, dis-

arming punitive units in the districts, liberating prisoners, destroying call-up documents and registers of duties. Local inhabitants tended to refuse employment in administrative institutions. Villages were under partisan control at night, in some locations even during the day. Partisans gathered in forests in groups of a hundred and more, and built well-fortified camps.

In 1944 and 1945, there were several battles between partisans and interior troops: 14 partisans were killed in Pušynė Forest in the Kėdainiai district on 14 December 1944; 24 in Užulėnis Forest in the Ukmergė district on 12 January 1945; 68 in Troškūnai Forest in the Panevėžys district on 9 February; 75 in Ažagai Forest in the same district on 27 March; 83 in Labanoras Forest in the Utena district on 10–12 March; 36 in the Vepriai area in the Ukmergė district on 20 March; 44 in Kalniškė Forest in the Alytus district on 16 May; 11 in Varčia Forest in the Alytus district on 14 June; 15 in Virtukai Forest in the Raseiniai district on 19 July; etc. Airborne reconnaissance, mortars, and thousands of NKVD troops were used against the partisans, combing various districts sometimes for several weeks. These losses forced the partisans to change their tactics. They began to avoid direct confrontations with the much more numerous units of the NKVD army: partisan units split into smaller groups; fortified camps were replaced by well-camouflaged bunkers underground or in farmsteads. The most common military operation became the ambush, which often succeeded in eliminating officials and provided weapons.

On 10 February 1946, the first elections to the Supreme Council of the USSR were held in Lithuania. In addition to the two NKVD divisions already present, 18,000 Red Army troops were brought to Lithuania. The partisans opposed these undemocratic elections especially actively: thousands of proclamations calling on the public to ignore them were disseminated, propaganda literature was destroyed, telephone lines were cut. Assaults were made on 39 polling stations. On the day of the elections inhabitants hid from NKVD soldiers carrying ballot boxes around villages. Red Army soldiers, together with members of the electoral commission, cast ballot papers themselves. Thus, the sole candidate selected by the Communist Party and MGB was elected by almost 100 per cent of the vote.

In 1945, the authorities introduced a barbarous tactic – the public display of dead partisans in town squares. This was officially called identification;

however, the ultimate goal of the chekists was to frighten the population and identify the relatives of those killed. Undressed, tied up with rosaries, the mutilated corpses of the killed partisans were put on show to the public for several days, then transported to another town. The relatives of the victims were brought by force for identification. Often mothers would not confess that these were their sons, being scared that the whole family, including small children, would be persecuted because of the involvement of one family member in the resistance. Officials of the administration held meetings by the victims, schoolchildren were brought to these meetings and it was explained to them that such a destiny awaited all the enemies of Soviet rule. Finally, the corpses would be buried somewhere secret in landfills, gravel pits, or thrown into outside lavatories or old wells.

The changes in partisan tactics resulted in a new chekist response whereby military operations were arranged only in cases where partisan bases were known exactly. The MGB became more active in recruiting agents, the interrogation of prisoners changed. They were tortured sadistically (torture was officially called "active investigation" or "a physical impact"), subjected to psychological pressure, kept without sleep for months, and secret agents were introduced into their cells. In 1946, the MGB of the LSSR began to use special provocateur groups pretending to be partisans. Such groups would "liberate" prisoners and obtain by deception the information that had been witheld from the investigators. These special groups made contact with partisan units by pretending to be a partisan group from another region. Having arranged a meeting with local partisans, they would kill them (usually while they were sleeping). In order to eliminate witnesses, they often killed families, acting in the name of the partisans.

Chekist action necessitated closer links between partisan units and a definition of the boundaries of the regions. In addition, having established contacts with émigré organisations and the Lithuanian diplomatic corps in the West, they faced the task of creating a general command to unite all partisan units capable of representing the country.

On 5 May 1946, two regions in southern Lithuania, Tauro and Dainavos, joined into a larger unit, the South Lithuanian Partisan Area, and produced the first political declaration of the partisans, which listed the principles of the restoration of independence. Contacts were established with representatives

of the émigrés who succeeded in crossing the border, and steps were taken to create an overall underground leadership. The MGB, however, succeeded in disrupting this process. The agent Juozas Markulis, representing a fictional underground intelligence group, succeeded in getting the leading position in an underground organisation, BDPS, established on 6 June 1946. The highest partisan command, where a few MGB agents were infiltrated among the representatives from the partisan regions, was to come under this political leadership. Thus, using agents infiltrated into the top command of the partisans, the MGB gained the opportunity to liquidate the underground from within. Markulis, as a representative of the political centre, travelled across different districts and had a chance not only to find out the locations of commands but also to promote the "new tactics": he encouraged the partisans to demobilise, to put their weapons away, and promised the men fake documents. For this purpose he requested lists of partisans and photographs from the region leadership. The partisans who yielded to this ploy and acquired fake documents were arrested. The operations had the most effect in the Didžiosios Kovos apygarda. Its commander, Jonas Misiūnas, was called to a meeting in Vilnius and arrested. He was replaced by the centre by Captain Griežtas – the MGB agent Vytautas Pečiūra. With the aid of more agents, the region was practically liquidated in 1948 (one unit continued in action until 1950). The agents succeeded in eliminating the command of the Žemaičių apygarda; other regions suffered losses in action. In early 1947, Lukša, the representative of the Tauro apygarda at the command centre, uncovered the MGB plot. Despite the warnings, east Lithuanian partisans did not dissociate themselves from the agents until the autumn of 1948.

After the plot was revealed, an initiative to form a partisan command was taken by the commander of the Tauro apygarda, Antanas Baltūsis. Since the name of the BDPS was already known abroad, the command was called the Presidium of the BDPS. Political issues of the resistance were assigned to the political sector of the BDPS, military ones to the command centre. A BDPS foreign delegation operated abroad. It was warned about the MGB infiltration and the activities of Markulis by Lukša and Pyplys, who crossed the Polish border in late 1947 and reached the free world.

In 1947, relations between regions were established and a common underground command structure was discussed. The regions grew stronger:

they had gained experience of partisan warfare, developed the main forms of regulation of their activities, and had formed active units capable of resisting the oppressors. In order to eliminate the social basis of the partisans, in 1947 the administration started making lists of *buožės* (kulaks, or wealthy farmers). In the beginning, only the owners of 18 hectares of farmland or more were included, but eventually the qualification dropped to five hectares. The buožės were assigned double duties, and non-compliance was threatened by imprisonment and confiscation of the farms (from 1944 to 1953, 140,000 farmers were taken to court for failing to hand over grain and to pay taxes).[7] Finance inspectors, supply officials and Communist Party activists travelled with armed escorts to register the crops and livestock of farmers. Partisans ambushed them, destroyed tax registers, and hindered the confiscation of farmers' property.

The property of the deported or arrested people was settled on by Russian colonists brought from the Soviet Union. Partisans warned them not to settle in the farmsteads, but the colonists ignored verbal warnings. A group who settled in the village of Obšrūtai in the Vilkaviškis district organised a cooperative farm. They were tax-exempt, received various privileges and bullied local people. Finally, they were armed (having received a few light machine guns, automatic and conventional rifles from the NKVD) and engaged in robbery.[8] The partisans sent them multiple warnings, both oral and written, but the colonists ignored them. On 16 November 1947, the partisans of the Tauro apygarda attacked the village. Twenty four colonists were killed in the struggle. After this action, colonists avoided settling in the Lithuanian countryside, and many farmsteads of deported families were abandoned.

In order to avoid casualties, the partisan leadership ordered those arriving in Lithuania with hostile intentions to leave the country, and the local inhabitants who were spying or collaborating with the authorities, to move to towns. The Dainavos apygarda published the newspaper *Svobodnoje slovo* (The Free Word) in Russian, in which the goals of the partisans were explained. The newspaper targeted Russian soldiers and colonists. Spying, receiving arms from the NKVD, denouncements which resulted in the deportation or arrest of at least two persons, and robbery were accorded the death penalty, according to the partisan Criminal Statute. The rules of the procedure, however, required warning the person committing the crime before opening the case. If the

criminal activities continued, the crime was investigated. The crime had to be proved by the testimony of at least three witnesses, and only then could an execution take place. From 1949, the punishment was changed: when there was no direct threat to partisans and the population, punishment was put off until the restoration of independence.

From 1946 to 1948, as the number of partisans decreased to a few thousand (there were 4,500 in 1946 and 2,300 in 1948)[9] and strong regions were created, casualties also dropped by three times, compared to the period between 1944 and 1945. At this stage, the struggle was more or less balanced: casualties among the occupying forces sometimes even exceeded casualties among the partisans. Military action, however, was no longer the first priority of the partisans. A very important task was the education of the public, for Soviet propaganda put severe pressure on moral values. Partisan regions and corps published newspapers and occasional proclamations which were disseminated among the civilian population. During the entire partisan war, at least 54 different periodicals and 18 other publications were published.[10] Some typewritten publications were circulated in as few as 50 copies, but stronger units had printing presses and published newspapers in editions of up to 5,000. The longest-running newspaper was *Laisvės varpas* (The Bell of Freedom), published by the Kęstučio apygarda; 176 issues were published from 1946 till the spring of 1953. The last was the newsletter *Partizanų šūvių aidas* (The Echo of Partisan Gunshots), published by the Juozapavičiaus group of the Prisikėlimo apygarda until 1957.

A lot of attention in the partisan press focused on world news. As the authorities had deprived the population of radios, the partisans listened to news broadcasts in different languages from abroad, and informed both the fighters and the people of the international situation. The press also covered the most important local events, executions by the occupying authorities, partisan attacks, national and religious holidays. Many partisans, although poorly educated villagers, wrote poetry and songs and kept diaries. The Prisikėlimo apygarda published five volumes of poetry and songs that were sung all over the country. Living in the face of death encouraged creativity. Several talented poets and writers of the pre-war period were among the partisans: Bronius Krivickas, Mamertas Indriliūnas, Konstatinas Bajerčius, Diana Glemžaitė. All of them were killed. Eventually, the partisans became short of officers and

educated civilians to work in public education. The intelligentsia was eliminated in 1941; some moved to the West, the others were concentrated in towns, isolated from the struggling countryside and economically dependent on the occupying government, which encouraged collaboration through persecution. Most partisans were country people, schoolchildren and students; half of them had never even done military service before. The commanders of regions and corps were captains and lieutenants of the former army of the Republic of Lithuania (37 per cent of all regional commanders), teachers (ten per cent), policemen (ten per cent), students or high school pupils (ten per cent), and people from other walks of life.

From 1947 to 1949 proclamations were disseminated some 400 times annually, and several hundred people were arrested for it, mostly schoolchildren. In their proclamations targeting teachers and young people, partisans revealed the inhuman nature of the totalitarian system, called on them to remember the traditions of the nation and its history, and to ignore the propaganda of communist ideology. Partisan printing presses were established in cramped underground bunkers, where women and girls often worked. When these bunkers were surrounded, the partisans often shot themselves or blew themselves up in order not to be captured by chekists who would torture them in the most sadistic ways to force them to betray their friends. Some tried to mutilate their faces so much that they were unrecognisable and the authorities would not be able to identify them and punish their relatives. On 12 April 1950, the editor of *Aukštaičių kova* (The Struggle of the Aukštaičiai), Bronius Kazickas, shot himself in a siege; on 21 September 1952, the new editor of the same newspaper, Bronius Krivickas, did the same. On 17 January 1953, the same way out was chosen by the publishers of the newspapers *Laisvės varpas* and *Vyčių keliu* (On the Path of Knights), Antanas Bakšys, Jonas Jurkūnas and Elena Gendrolytė; on 27 August 1953, the editor of *Laisvės balsas* (The Voice of Freedom) Irena Petkutė and many others did the same. On 23 December 1952, surrounded in a bunker, the editor of the newspapers *Malda girioje* (A Prayer in the Wood) and *Kovojantis lietuvis* (Lithuanian Fighter), the 21-year-old Monika Alūzaitė, attempted to shoot herself, but the shot was not fatal. With a wound in her head she was captured by chekists and sentenced to 25 years in concentration camps.

In order to capture partisans alive, from 1946 chekists began to use special soporific preparations. Often partisans were poisoned by chemicals in their

food or drinks. Such operations were carried out by MGB agents, whose network was developed by the MGB from the first days of the occupation. Those who refused to spy were prosecuted for revealing a secret of state importance and their families were persecuted, while they themselves were discredited in front of the public and the partisans. To this end, chekists would occasionally leave documents in villages, indicating that a person had been recruited. The individuals were photographed in the company of chekists or by the dead bodies of partisans, and the photographs disseminated as proof of them being traitors. The betrayal of partisans was well rewarded. Through threats and blackmail, many recruits signed collaboration agreements with the MGB. In 1951, 27,700 MGB agents and informers were recruited.[11] Since the majority of them were recruited forcibly and did not work for chekists, the MGB carried out a reform of the informer network on 10 January 1952, and expelled inactive agents from the agency. Such formally recruited agents accounted for 70 per cent of the total number of agents. Eventually, however, some people were broken spiritually and carried out the tasks of MGB.

In 1948, betrayed by an agent, Baltūsis, the organiser of the BDPS Presidium, the commander of the Tauro apygarda, was killed. Soon other members of the Presidium who were living legally were identified and arrested.

Being incapable of breaking the partisan resistance by military force (in 1946 one partisan was pursued by ten to 12 NKVD soldiers and operatives; while in 1952 the ratio was one to 30),[12] the government decided to destroy the backing of the freedom fighters, to eliminate the part of society that was directly supporting them. In March 1948, the Central Committee of the LCP and the Council of Ministers of the LSSR passed the resolution "On the Organisation of Collective Farms in the Republic". Collective farms were made compulsory. Armed activists of the Communist Party brought villagers to meetings, and they were kept there until they agreed to sign the application to join a collective farm. Lithuania was an agricultural country, the people had developed especially strong bonds with their land and homes. The confiscation of land and livestock was a terrible tragedy. Those who refused to join collective farms were again burdened by increased duties: nobody was able to pay, and people became impoverished. Partisan intelligence established that the government was planning new rounds of deportations. Deportations took

place every year, but they were not always on a large scale: several thousand buožės and partisan family members were purged annually. Partisans tried to warn the population so that they could escape the purges (during the purges in 1948, some 11,000 people managed to escape),[13] they also tried to protect the property of those deported, to pass it on to their relatives. Groups for the support of deportees were established at partisan regional commands who organised parcels for deportees.

Between 22 and 27 May 1948, over 40,000 people were deported.[14] Some 30,000 MGB and MVD officials, soldiers and operatives were involved in the purge; they were helped by 11,000 armed members of the Communist Party. The purge was repeated again in March 1949: some 29,000 people were deported by more than 30,000 officials.[15] The people who sheltered children escaping the purges were sentenced to five years in prison. The purges suppressed the resistance of the people, broke their will, and, seeing no alternative, they began to join collective farms. In early 1949 only 3.8 per cent of farms belonged to the collective farms; by the end of the year 62.4 per cent; and by 1950, 90 per cent of all farmers had become members of collective farms. The farm buildings were compulsorily incorporated into collective farm settlements (often under the excuse of land reclamation works). A total of 300,000 farmsteads were destroyed and their owners moved into new settlements.[16]

Partisans resisted this mainly by propaganda: they wrote articles, distributed proclamations, and sent warnings to Communist Party activists threatening farmers. They also urged chairmen and leaders of collective farms to give up their positions, held trials of spies and the participants in purges, applied fines and punishments.

The purges cut partisan support in the rural areas. The independent farmers were impoverished by duties and taxes; many abandoned their homes, being afraid of the purges. Others were moved into settlements on collective farms where the partisans could not reach them. Until then, partisans were mainly supplied with food by villagers; when collective farms were created and the patriotic section of the population deported, partisans had to take care of provisions themselves. They requisitioned food from state enterprises and warehouses of collective farms. Such actions often disclosed the existence of partisans and provoked additional reprisals. With many individuals

hiding from purges, the MGB gained favourable conditions to infiltrate its agents among the partisans. Partisans responded by restricting the acceptance of new members, they assisted those hiding from deportation by issuing them with fake documents. In order to alleviate their position, partisans confiscated personal identity documents from people and gave them to those who had no documents at all.

While officials were cynically claiming that soon there would be no Lithuanians in Lithuania, the underground continued trying to form a united command. In early 1948, when the BDPS Presidium was eliminated and Baltūsis was killed, the initiative was taken by the commander of the Kęstučio apygarda, Captain Jonas Žemaitis. With communication periodically breaking down between the regions, a more efficient way of commanding the partisan units was through the regional centres. Till then, two partisan regions (Dainavos and Tauro) of southern Lithuania had already combined into the Nemuno apygarda on 9 April 1946, and the Karaliaus Mindaugo apygarda had been established in eastern Lithuania on 2 January 1947 (the Vytauto, Vyčio, Algimanto and the Didžiosios Kovos apygardas joined together on 1 May 1948). On 5 May 1948, Žemaitis formed the Jūros apygarda of the western regions of Kęstučio, Žemaičių and Prisikėlimo. On 10 July of the same year he announced that a unified Freedom Fight Movement organisation had been created which brought together all the partisan regions.[1] In November, a meeting of the commanders of western and eastern regions was held, and the decision was made to restore the Presidium of the BDPS, to prepare new regulations for the movement and to change the name. Žemaitis was elected commander in chief of the BDPS armed forces, he was also commissioned to act as provisional chairman of the Presidium. At that time some 2,000 partisans were still operating. After assessing the situation, it was decided to give up the division between the military and the political leadership of the underground, and the political sector was incorporated into the public unit in the BDPS. The institution was to have two units: national and political. The national unit was responsible for patriotic education, while the political one had to plan strategy and the goals of the struggle.

From 10 to 20 February 1949, the largest meeting yet took place in the bunker of the Prisikėlimo apygarda command (in the village of Minaičiai, between Radviliškis and Baisogala). The previous meetings usually involved representa-

tives of three to four regions, while this meeting was attended by the commanders and representatives of all Lithuania's partisan regions (eight members of the presidium of the BDPS and members of the Military Council).

Because of the attempts by the MGB to discredit the name of the BDPS abroad, the re-established underground organisation was named the Lietuvos laisvės kovos sąjūdis (LLKS, Lithuanian Movement for the Fight for Freedom). The meeting also discussed the goals of the underground movement in the event of a prolonged occupation, and analysed the main documents regulating partisan activities: the LLKS Statute, military training programmes and education, etc. It concluded that Lithuania had been under martial law since 15 June 1940. Partisan units were referred to as the defence force of the Republic of Lithuania. The underground organisation of the entire country was headed by the democratically elected Presidium of the LLKS Council. The Council consisted of Presidium members and representatives of all district and region commands (15 people in 1949). Captain Žemaitis, representing western Lithuania, was elected chairman of the Presidium of the LLKS Council (he was given the highest rank of partisan general); a representative of the south, the commander-in-chief of the LLKS armed forces, Adolfas Ramanauskas, and of the east, the head of the public unit, Juozas Šibaila, were elected his deputies.

On 16 February 1949, on the occasion of the celebration of the Declaration of Independence, a meeting of the partisan command issued a declaration. It stated that the LLKS Council was the highest political authority of the nation leading the struggle for freedom and, at the end of the occupation, would be responsible for the creation of a provisional government and for organising democratic parliamentary elections.[18] The foundations for the restoration of statehood were laid, ensuring equal rights for all citizens. The Communist Party, being of a dictatorial character, was the only party declared illegal. The partisan leadership addressed the free world, asking for support in implementing its goals.

The new regulations applied to all partisan units. Both the documents and the organisational structure were continuously improved. As interaction was impaired and communication between the command and the units was breaking down, on 13 March 1950 the LLKS Presidium was divided into three sections directly controlling the regions. Since convening the Council was

almost impossible, a special publication – the bulletin of the LLKS Council – was launched to discuss the main issues. This publication served as a forum for discussions by correspondence on the issues of the restoration of statehood and for publishing decisions taken. With the number of partisans declining, the smallest units were merged. The territory of each was increased from two to four rural districts, to three to eight from 10 February 1950. Because of a lack of officials, some were moved from other sections by decision of the command. Often a single official was made head of several divisions (a staff normally consisted of organisational, public, reconnaissance, operational, transport and supply divisions). In August 1947, the Tauro apygarda organised a training course that was completed by one group (the second non-commissioned officers' course had to be cancelled because of the approach of MVD troops). In 1948, the Prisikėlimo apygarda planned a similar course, but gave up the idea because of a chekist operation.

Although in 1949 a military conflict between the West and the East was still expected (partisan staffs produced plans for such an event), a realistic analysis of the situation required changing the tactics of the resistance. A decision was made to stop trying to increase the numbers of armed fighters and to focus on maintaining the underground network of staff and communication covering the whole of Lithuania. Communication between the chief command and the districts and regions was maintained by messenger, usually a girl with fake documents. If arrested, they had no chance to commit suicide and had to face torture. On the arrest of a single messenger, all communication posts had to be changed, therefore communications could be broken for several months. For this reason, some provisions of the LLKS Statute were amended (for instance, partisan military ranks were given up from 1 August 1951), all commands (down to the lowest level) prepared to operate independently, according to common regulations.

Although regional commands were formed in 1948 and 1949, the formation of a general staff could not proceed due to a lack of personnel. Therefore, the organisational structure of the LLKS was slightly modified on 30 May 1950. Instead of the general staff and public unit, only positions of the leaders of the military and public activities were introduced (without corresponding staffs).

Public activities were given special attention from 1949. The partisan press tried to neutralise the impact of communist propaganda on society, to de-

velop values and national consciousness. After the authorities had withdrawn from libraries and banned all books published in the period of independence, after the modification of all teaching programmes, the removal of state symbols, the demolition of monuments to Lithuanian statehood, partisan newspapers, prayer books, poetry collections and proclamations were the only sources for teaching Lithuanian history. The year 1949 was a watershed. On one hand, the LLKS, a strong partisan organisation bringing together all patriotic forces, was founded. On the other hand, the destruction of partisan structures and the decline of the resistance began. After the mass purges of 1948 and 1949, and compulsory collectivisation, the partisans avoided armed combat; however they were betrayed one by one by agents. On 9 September 1949, the staff of the Jūros apygarda in the west of the country was liquidated, and in October the same year the staff of the Karaliaus Mindaugo apygarda of eastern Lithuania. Seven regional commanders were killed in this year.

Although the chairman of the LLKS Presidium, Žemaitis, was mainly based in the Prisikėlimo apygarda in central Lithuania, which had connections with all the regions, he spent a lot of time inspecting military units. Moving from one region to another from 1949 to 1951, he met the fighters, rebuilt commands, reallocated personnel and tried to put into practice the mission statements of the LLKS. Foreign relations were established through the Tauro apygarda (its territory bordered Poland and the Kaliningrad region). The regions of Žemaičių and Vytauto were ordered to seek contacts with the Latvian and Belarusian underground (individual units of the Mažeikiai, Joniškio and Biržai districts maintained irregular contact with the Latvian partisans). Attempts were made to organise the underground in the Vilnius and Klaipėda districts. In 1944 and 1945, the Polish Armija Krajowa (AK) partisans were active in the Vilnius region. Some discussions were held with them, but no regular contacts were established. In 1945 and 1946, the majority of AK partisans surrendered: people of Polish nationality were repatriated to Poland. The Klaipėda area suffered especially severely: most of the population were killed or removed from their homes, and colonists took over the empty farmsteads. In 1947, the Rambyno Corps was formed, but the members were soon arrested. Another attempt to establish a network in Klaipėda was made in 1950, but these partisans were also captured by the MGB. The inhabitants of the big cities were hardly involved in the partisan

war, because due to the strict passport regime, frequent MGB checks and a denser network of MGB agents, illegal activities were impossible. Having established that the chief command of the partisans was based in the Prisikėlimo apygarda, the occupying military administration based the staff of one of the two MVD divisions present in Lithuania at that time in Šiauliai on 27 December 1949. Military operations became more intense: forests, fields and settlements were combed after receiving information about partisan activities. After Žemaitis had a clash with chekists in March 1951, two MVD regiments scoured the Kėdainiai and Raseiniai districts for three months. When Lukša, the foreign representative of the LLKS, returned to Lithuania in October 1950, over 2,000 MVD troops pursued him in the Kazlų Rūda forests in April and May 1951. In the autumn of 1952, when the recruited commander of the eastern region, Jonas Kimštas, gave away the location of the bunker of the public unit, 1,160 MVD troops were sent into operation against two officers (one of them being the poet Krivickas). In 1950, due to the declining number of partisans and the lack of officers, the regions of Didžiosios Kovos and Algimanto were disbanded, followed by Prisikėlimo in 1952. Although the number of partisans in 1952 was a quarter of what it had been in 1948, (in the summer of 1952 there were only some 500 fighters left), the relative number of casualties had increased (1,135 in 1948, and 457 in 1952), while casualties among the MVD forces and collaborators were five times less than those of the partisans (in 1949 the figures had been almost equal).[19] Despite the losses, regional and district staffs were still operating in 1952, and 17 periodicals were published. In 1952, the commander of the western region, Antanas Bakšys, foreseeing the inevitable end of the armed resistance, attempted to establish a new public political underground organisation, Vyčių sąjunga, to continue the resistance to the occupation and the totalitarian regime in a non-violent form. A plan was prepared, a newspaper was published, partisan areas were ordered to organise Vyčių sąjunga divisions among young people in their areas. The work was disrupted by the death of Bakšys.

In the last stages of the war, the MGB eliminated partisans mainly by using agents recruited from among the arrested partisans. The long underground struggle, difficult living conditions, the deportation of supporters and the clear realisation that there would be no conflict between the Soviet

Union and the West and no real possibilities to restore the independent state, in addition to torture during interrogation, had broken the will of some partisans and they agreed to work for the MGB. (They were in a minority: only four out of the 46 highest partisan commanders of regions and districts who had been appointed throughout the entire period of resistance were recruited by the MGB.)

In December 1951, Žemaitis, the chairman of the LLKS Presidium, was cut down by a stroke; he was half-paralysed and spent another year and a half in a cramped underground bunker in Šimkaičiai Forest in the Jurbarkas district. During that time, the election of a new chairman according to the procedures laid down by the LLKS Statute – by a two-thirds majority of Council members – did not succeed. Correspondence had lasted too long, and Žemaitis resumed his duties in the spring of 1953 after recovering. He planned to send a couple of partisans across the northern border of the USSR in Karelia, to appeal to the free world for support and to highlight the political situation (at that time US Congressman Charles Kersten was organising a committee for the investigation of communist repression in the Baltic states). On 30 May 1953 the bunker was discovered and Žemaitis was arrested.

The USSR minister for the interior, Lavrenti Beria, who, after Stalin's death, was struggling for power against Communist Party functionaries, was especially interested in the liquidation of the partisan command. In April and May of 1953, the leadership of the LSSR MVD was removed, the secretary of the LCP CC, Antanas Sniečkus, was accused of having a poor understanding of national policies and an inability to break the armed resistance. On 26 May 1953, while criticising Sniečkus at the Central Committee of the CPSS, Beria acknowledged that the "Lithuanian underground is headed by the captain of the bourgeois Lithuanian army, Žemaitis, elected by the underground as 'president of Lithuania' ".[20] Žemaitis was taken to Moscow to see Beria "for negotiations".[21] Beria himself interrogated him on 25 June. Žemaitis was sentenced to death and shot on 26 November 1954.

In early 1953, the head of public activities of the LLKS, Juozas Šibaila, the commanders of the western and eastern regions, Bakšys and Sergijus Staniškis, were killed. The only surviving member of the command, the head of military activities, Ramanauskas, was not arrested until 1956. At that time some 45 partisans were still in hiding, but the armed resistance was already over.

Ramanauskas was tortured (as confirmed by the prison medical records) and shot on 29 November 1957. In 1965, two partisans were surrounded and shot themselves in order not to be taken prisoner after surviving underground for 20 years. The last Lithuanian partisan, Stasys Guiga, sheltered by a village woman, managed to escape arrest till the very end of his life in 1986.

After the partisan war was over in Lithuania, many underground youth groups resisting the communist regime by disseminating proclamations and raising the national flag were uncovered (20 in 1954; 11 in 1955; 14 in 1956; 29 in 1957; ten in 1958; 14 in 1959).[22] Eventually, their numbers and the resistance took other forms. It became personal, or balanced on the edge of tolerance of USSR law (petitions, country study groups, the ethnographic movement, etc.). From 1972 a new stage in the underground press started, characterised by *Lietuvos Katalikų Bažnyčios kronikos* (The Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church).

The partisan war is the most widespread and tragic example of the nation's struggle for survival. Some 20,200 partisans were killed, 140,000 people were sent to concentration camps and 118,000 deported.[23] The elimination of the most active part of the nation impoverished society, the compulsory adaptation to Soviet rule introduced through violence damaged society spiritually. The resolute resistance by the partisans, however, proved the resistance of the nation to violence and protected the country from colonisation. Unlike the other two Baltic states occupied by the Soviets in 1940, Lithuania succeeded in preserving a high ethnic population, 79.3 per cent (according to 1959 data).[24] The documents carried abroad by partisans, revealed the expansionist policy of the USSR and raised international awareness of the annexation of the Baltic states. They helped the USA and other countries to continue their policy of non-recognition of the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union. The most important aspect of this dramatic struggle was the intense determination to sacrifice for an ideal. This was revealed in his diary by one of the partisan members, the head of the Dainavos apygarda, Lionginas Baliukevičius, who was killed on 24 June 1950: "This could be the reason for the Baltic peoples being poor politicians. They have not learned to buy and sell their homeland. They have not learned to trade in their feelings. Therefore they are good soldiers who are not afraid of laying down their lives for the homeland."[25]

[1] A. Anušauskas, *Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas 1940–1958 metais.* Vilnius 1996, p. 403

[2] Ibid, p. 168

[3] Ibid, p. 199

[4] Ibid, p. 263

[5] Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas (LYA), F. K-1, ap. 3, b. 406, l. 19

[6] A. Anušauskas, op cit, p. 263; A. Kašėta. *Antisovietinio pasipriešinimo mastai Lietuvoje 1944–1953 m. Laisvės kovų archyvas* (LKA), Kaunas 1995, No 14, p. 71

[7] N. Gaškaitė, *Pasipriešinimo istorija, 1944–1953 metai.* Vilnius 1997, p. 27

[8] *Obšrūtų puolimas. Suvalkijos kovų aidai.* 1995, pp. 211-220

[9] N. Gaškaitė, D. Kuodytė, A. Kašėta, B. Ulevičius, *Lietuvos partizanai 1944–1953 metais.* Vilnius 1996, p. 366

[10] Ibid, p. 63-80

[11] *Lietuvos partizanų kovos ir jų slopinimas MVD-MGB dokumentuose 1944–1953 metais*, Vilnius 1996, p. 383

[12] N. Gaškaitė, op cit, p. 137

[13] A. Anušauskas, op cit, p. 322

[14] Ibid, p. 320

[15] Ibid, p. 324

[16] *Žemės reformai skirta beveik 31 mln. litų. Lietuvos aidas.* 23 April 1998 No 78, p. 9

[17] N. Gaškaitė, D. Kuodytė, A. Kašėta, B. Ulevičius, op cit, p. 139

[18] *LLKS tarybos 1949 m vasario 16 d. deklaracija. Laisvės kovos 1944–1953 metais.* pp. 311-313

[19] N. Gaškaitė, D. Kuodytė, A. Kašėta, B. Ulevičius, op cit, pp. 349, 366

[20] An address by A. Sniečkus at a meeting of the Central Committee of the CP of the USSR in July 1953. Extracts. A. Liekis, *LKP agonijos kronika.* Vilnius 1996, t. 1, p. 117

[21] Certificate by L. Martavičiaus deputy chairman of the KGB of the LSSR of 14 April 1954. LYA, F. K-1, criminal case No 33 960/3, t. 13, l. 499

[22] N. Gaškaitė, *Jaunimo pasipriešinimas ir jo slopinimas šeštajame-septintajame dešimtmetyje.* LKA, Kaunas 1996 No 19, p. 9

[23] A. Anušauskas, op cit, p. 403

[24] Figures of the 1959 all-Union census

[25] *Partizano Dzūko dienoraštis*, LKA, Kaunas 1993, No 6, p. 72

The NKVD-MVD-MGB Army

JUOZAS STARKAUSKAS

The army of the repressive structures was formed in the Soviet Union immediately after the October Revolution in 1917. Like the rest of the Soviet repressive system, it was reorganised many times. Chekists, were the main instruments of the Communist Party dictatorship. The Communist Party and chekists planned various actions, such as purges of particular layers of society or ethnic groups, arrests or executions, confiscation of property; whereas these plans were carried out by various NKVD-MGB forces.

On 1 April 1945, the NKVD army consisted of the following forces: interior troops, border troops, rear defence troops (formed on 4 May 1943, disbanded on 13 October 1945[1]), railway defence troops, key industries defence troops, transport troops and government communications troops.[2] In December 1945, the NKVD system had a staff, excluding military personnel, of 993,073 (including 374,000 agents, as of August 1944), while its armed forces of various kinds consisted of 680,280 soldiers.[3] Border troops, totalling almost half a million, formed the majority of all the different types of NKVD forces. The interior troops, which ravaged the country longer than any other, were estimated at 167,000 at that time.

By joint resolution No 0074/0029 of the MVD and MGB, from 21 January 1947 the interior forces were transferred from the MVD to the MGB (railway defence troops and key industries defence troops were transferred to the command of the MGB on 8 April 1948; border troops and police on 17 October 1949). On the day of the transfer, the internal troops, excluding border troops and other forces, consisted of 68,582 soldiers.

Lithuania suffered between July 1944 and October 1945 from the rear defence troops, formed of border regiments; and between July 1944 and October 1953 from the interior troops, consisting of riflemen regiments, and from the border guard troops, consisting of frontier detachments. The latter terrorised the people especially severely in 1944 and 1945, although they were present and active in Lithuania throughout the entire period of the resistance war.

The numbers of NKVD troops in Lithuania reached a peak in 1945. At times there were over 20 regiments and platoons. A regiment was a unit of up to 1,500 troops, from 700 to 800 of whom were ready for action, while the others worked at headquarters (a regiment had three commands – regimental staff and commands of three battalions) and in other support units, such as communications, transport, medical, supplies and others.

The activities of NKVD-MGB troops in Lithuania can be divided into three periods. During the first (1944 to 1945) units of various types of NKVD troops used the so-called Tartar-Cossack strategy of plunder and destruction. They did not have permanent garrisons. The second stage began in March 1946, when some 200 permanent garrisons were established, and up to 1948 a war was in progress, with both parties maintaining a military balance. The Soviet invaders controlled the cities and towns, as well as those rural areas where their troops were present. The third stage of the struggle began in 1949 as the Soviets gained supremacy. In the last two stages, the main fighting force was the eight regiments of the 4th Riflemen's Division. This consisted of 12 regiments in 1946; between January 1950 and April 1951, it was split into two divisions, the 2nd and the 4th, consisting of four regiments each.

The first troops to invade Lithuania in July 1944 were five NKVD rear defence regiments (the 13th, 86th, 132nd, 217th and 331st) of the 3rd Belarusian Rear Defence Corps. As has been mentioned, these troops were created in the Soviet Union in 1943, when the Chief Administration Board was founded. The formation of this army was aimed at building better communications between forces on the front line and the NKVD troops following them, which were to kill or arrest German soldiers, and arrest officials of the former German administration, German spies and their supporters, deserters and formerly imprisoned soldiers of the Russian army itself. Communists were suspicious of anybody who had been under the German occupation, and Stalin had announced that soldiers who surrendered would be considered traitors.

There were over 30 categories of true or imaginary enemy that had to be arrested, or even eliminated, by NKVD troops. After reaching Lithuania and encountering the resistance of Lithuanian (and Polish, in the Vilnius region) partisans, these units were mainly engaged in persecuting partisan detachments. Until then, NKVD divisions had operated independently in the rear. Now,

once NKVD units approached the front line, the chekists could use front line combat units extensively in punitive operations. The five NKVD regiments of the 3rd Belarusian Corps stayed in Lithuania until February 1945, and after that were relocated to East Prussia, where, along with other NKVD units, they carried out a plan that caused starvation in that fertile region, resulting even in cannibalism, and forced the population to flee. Thus, new space for colonists was created. On the instructions of General Arkady Apolonov, who was deputy to the NKVD people's commissar (minister) and the head of the administration of the NKVD army, the unit was sent back to Lithuania from East Prussia in June 1945 (most other units had been disbanded after the end of the war) and fought the partisans until October (the 13th, 86th and 132nd regiments were returned to Lithuania and sent into action).

The NKVD rear defence army of the 1st Baltic Corps, consisting of the 31st, 33rd and 216th regiments, was also deployed in Lithuania. It had also been sent to East Prussia and later returned to Lithuania. The 216th Regiment was replaced by the 217th, which formerly had been under the 3rd Belarusian Corps. On its arrival in Lithuania, this regiment was assigned to an analogous unit of the Leningrad Corps, which was moved from Latvia to Lithuania in June 1945 (it consisted of the 12th and 13th frontier regiments). After the 217th Frontier Regiment was transferred, the 220th Frontier Regiment, which until then was the only frontier regiment that had not been sent to East Prussia, but fought against the well-organised and fiercely resisting partisans of the Dzūkija region, was assigned to the 1st Baltic Corps.

Perhaps due to financial reasons, the 1st Baltic Corps was renamed the 1st NKVD Ukrainian Corps on 20 August 1945. The 134th Frontier Regiment was also assigned to it. The regiments of all three corps were disbanded in October 1945. Altogether, 12 border regiments were deployed.

Between 1944 and 1945, seven frontier companies were employed: the 94th, 95th, 97th, 23rd, and later the 113th, 115th and 116th. The first four fought partisans until February 1945, while after that they were assigned to guard the coast (23rd), the Lithuanian-East Prussian border (97th and, partly, 95th) and the Lithuanian-Polish border (94th and 95th). While guarding the borders, the frontier companies formed joint commands and other units of sometimes up to 1,000 soldiers which were sent to fight partisans from 50 to 70 kilometres from the border. Frontier guards fought against partisans until

the very end of the partisan war. However, their main task was to guard the border so that nobody could cross it. At the Polish border, in places inhabited by Lithuanians and known as the Suvalkai Triangle, Lithuanian partisans kept a permanent platoon of several dozen partisans, whose main task was to assist the fighters in crossing the border with the minimum possible risk. However, by the end of 1947 the border was sealed with barbed wire fences, mines and guard posts, and crossing it became very dangerous. With the fortification of the border, the already weak communications between the country and Lithuanian diplomats and émigré organisations abroad were completely disrupted. In the early 1950s, foreign intelligence agencies brought their agents to join partisan units either by air or by landing them on the Lithuanian coast.

The first riflemen regiments arrived in Lithuania in August 1944. This was the 4th NKVD Division, headed for many years by a fierce Stalinist, Major General Pavel Vetrov. Four regiments of this division arrived: the 137th, 25th, 298th and 261st. By early 1946, there were six regiments: the 32nd and 273rd regiments had been added; while in March of the same year three more regiments arrived, the 34th, 262nd and 285th. By the end of 1946, the 4th Division consisted of eight regiments: the 25th, 32nd, 34th, 137th, 261st, 273rd, 298th and 353rd. These regiments remained in Lithuania until April 1951. Then three (the 25th, 137th and 273rd) were assigned to border duty. The remaining five regiments were reorganised into units for internal operations in August 1951, until 1953 when the partisan movement was almost completely suppressed.

After 1946 the armed resistance was still strong in Lithuania and western Ukraine, and NKVD-MGB divisions were taken from neighbouring countries: among them the 6th Division, deployed in Belarus (disbanded in October 1945), the 7th (reorganised in 1951) and the 10th (disbanded in June 1946). Units of the 5th Division deployed in Latvia were also quite often involved in combat in Lithuania until 1951. Large units of several hundred soldiers were formed by the students of Saratov, Moscow, Leningrad and Ordzhonikidze NKVD-MGB schools, and brought to fight in Lithuania for several months. There were smaller units involved as well, which were not part of any larger formations.

In addition to the combat units, several support units of NKVD forces were deployed in Lithuania. The arrested, sentenced, and deported people

were guarded by the 37th (1944–1947), 223rd (1944–1946), 240th (1944–1947) and 132nd (1945–1951, later reorganised) regiments. The 211th (1944–1951, later reorganised) railway defence regiment guarded railway and road bridges.

In 1944 and 1945, the army had practically no permanent garrisons. Only the frontier regiments were permanent (a regiment consisted of three battalions of some 300 troops each; a battalion consisted of three companies of 60 to 70 men; a company consisted of three platoons from 15 to 25 soldiers; a platoon included three squads of six to eight soldiers).

As has been mentioned, at that time the so-called Tartar-Cossack strategy was used: the troops would invade an area, killing those who resisted, those who were merely suspected or sometimes even absolutely innocent people. Having laid waste one area (assuming or pretending that the centres of resistance had been eliminated there), they would transfer to another. These actions were aimed not only at killing or arresting those who resisted, but also at terrorising the people and breaking their will to resist the occupation.

Russians acted cruelly throughout the entire period of the struggle, however, they were especially cruel in 1944 and 1945. Senior commanders encouraged more murders and arrests, and set unrealistic tasks for the army. For instance, one of the greatest Soviet butchers, Lavrenti Beria, who was the people's commissar (minister) of the NKVD, ordered Lithuania to be cleared of partisans "within a fortnight"[4] (in the end the partisan war in Lithuania lasted for almost ten years). During the Second World War, the brutal actions of Soviet forces were pushed to the limit by Sergey Kruglov, a deputy of Beria. Visiting Lithuania in September 1944, he ordered, in the name of Stalin and Beria, the imposition of Soviet authority in Lithuania at any cost. According to him, anybody who ran away, whether armed or not, was an enemy and had to be shot (this way most village idiots were killed as they did not understand what soldiers speaking a strange language wanted of them), and every farm visited by partisans was an enemy house and could be burnt down.[5]

The actions of the army are well characterised by the case of the Klemanskiai family in the village of Švendriai (Šiauliai district) on 1 August 1945. This terrible event was reported to Russian counterintelligence by a participant in the massacre, Private V. Strekalov. Here is his story: "... then Lipin [the chief of the cordon, a lieutenant – J.S.] gave the order to take the inhabitants of this

house inside, to fire at the windows and to set the house, with the people inside it, on fire. Diatlov [deputy chief of the cordon, a lieutenant – J.S.] poured petrol on the floor of the house and set it on fire, and then Private Janin set the house on fire from the outside. When an old woman, crossing herself, came out of the house, followed by a girl, Lipin told them to go back. Then the old woman and the girl started to run. Lipin took out his pistol and began shooting at each of them but missed. One soldier shot down the old woman, while Lipin ran after the girl and shot her at close range. Then he ordered two soldiers to take the bodies and to throw them through the window into the house. The soldiers took the old woman by the hands and feet and threw her into the burning house, then did the same with the corpse of the girl. Soon an old man and the elder son ran out of the house through another door. Soldiers opened fire but could not get them. Then I and two other soldiers were ordered to catch and kill the son, but we failed as it was dark and he escaped. On returning to the house we started combing the rye field. We found the old man there, he was wounded and was crawling through the rye. One of the soldiers finished him off and we brought the corpse to the house. Diatlov ordered it to be thrown into the burning cow shed, but it was impossible to approach it because of the heat, and the soldiers refused to throw the corpse into the flames. Then Diatlov and another sergeant wrapped themselves in camouflage coats, grabbed the old man by his hands and feet and began swinging the body so as to throw him further, but even they failed to get him into the flames ... At dawn, I, Diatlov and a few soldiers went to the burnt house to fetch a pig and two sheep we had shot that night, as well as the body of the old man, to prove that we had eliminated a group of bandits. The corpse was partly destroyed by the fire and we did not take it. I saw the corpse of a teenager who had been burnt alive on the stove. Then we took the pig and the sheep and returned to the cordon."[6]

Chekist counterintelligence registered more similar cases (this is only a small part of all the crimes committed by the invading army), but this one is special because two cordons, from 60 to 70 soldiers, were involved in the massacre. The main reason that counterintelligence began to investigate the massacres committed by their own forces was the fact that the senior command suspected that some of the army units only pretended to fight by slaughtering innocent civilians instead of partisans.

In addition to these pressures imposed by the command, there were other reasons for cruelty by the Soviet army in Lithuania. During the war, chekist units obeyed all their orders as they were afraid of being sent to the front line (only one frontier platoon out of some 25 border regiments of the chekist forces that were active in Lithuania actually fought on the front line for several months). After the war, the interior troops were always supplied with the best food, and officers were even given food free.[7] Officers, sergeants and privates were given financial and other rewards (holidays, promotion and presents) for killed or arrested partisans. They received quite a lot of American gifts.[8] (They often drove Studebaker or Chevrolet vehicles.) More active officers could receive a second salary as a reward for killing or arresting partisans. In addition to this, their cruelty was also guaranteed by the selection principles for candidates to the NKVD-MGB forces (the candidates selected were ideologically reliable, from certain types of families) and their isolation from local people. Quite a lot of soldiers – perhaps even most of them – thought that all Lithuanians were enemies, and if they did not shoot them, they would be shot. "Shoot at anyone, and you'll hit an enemy," chekists used to say.

Cruelty was encouraged in the NKVD-MGB forces, the soldiers were trained to kill; however, the command wanted this to be a controlled process aimed at enemies of Soviet authority, and therefore those who tried too hard to some extent were prosecuted. In addition, as already mentioned, there were suspicions that some units only pretended to fight, by murdering civilians, not fighting the partisans. Lieutenant Colonel S.Grimovich, military procurator of the MVD interior forces in the Lithuanian frontier district, wrote to the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party on 24 March 1947 that in 1945 as many as 328 NKVD officers, sergeants and privates were convicted for serious offences (arbitrary executions, murder, rape and plunder). In the first quarter of 1946, 137 were convicted. During those months, the military shot 55 innocent civilians and destroyed 120 farms. Between January and February 1947, 16 people were illegally executed.[9] The abovementioned lieutenant colonel further explained in his letter to the Central Committee, why, in his opinion, there were so many offences: 1) There was a severe struggle going on, soldiers and officers saw many people die and the weaker ones lost their minds and their common sense, "they perceived local people as bandits or supporters, and thus happened to commit unau-

thorised actions"; 2) Some soldiers and officers were immoral, lazy and thought only of promotion; they covered up their inactivity with arrests and executions; 3) There were those who tried to get rich by plundering, raping and robbing. Many of them drank hard.[10] The procurator had a good insight into the moral status of the Soviet army, but he was unable to change anything, because of the ill-conceived ideological foundation of the Soviet state (the theory of class struggle, atheism, the motto "those who do not surrender, must be destroyed", etc.).

After 1946, when the 4th Riflemen's Division were the sole fighting force against the armed resistance, massacres of the civilian population decreased, although individuals were murdered throughout the entire period of the partisan war. According to the chekists, during the partisan war, 20,093 partisans were killed, 17,963 taken prisoner and 38,604 left the forests and surrendered their weapons.[11] It is believed that of the 12,213 people that were reported by chekists as partisans killed between 1944 and 1945, one third to a half were in fact unarmed men hiding to escape conscription into the Soviet army. Therefore, from 4,000 to 6,000 innocent people were murdered in these years (this number does not include the victims of the Red Army). All this went along with arrests, investigations, searches, destruction of farms, confiscation of property and land, interrogation, deportations and other means of terror that forced stronger people to take up arms to defend themselves and their relatives, to seek revenge for them and their enslaved country.

The second stage of the struggle began on 26 March 1946, when the minister of the interior of the puppet government of Lithuania, Josifas Bartašiūnas, signed an order authorising 200 permanent garrisons of interior troops[12] to be set up in the regional centres and most of the rural districts (there were 26 regions and 267 rural districts in 1945: thus, permanent garrisons were set up in two thirds of all areas). This step was taken in the belief that the armed resistance would not be broken unless certain groups of people were formed which either openly (Communist Party activists) or secretly (agents and informers) supported the invaders. Collaborators and representatives of the Soviet administration living in rural district centres were afraid to step outside without an armed guard, and requested these permanent garrisons. Between 1944 and 1946 partisans attacked and took control of dozens of rural district centres, some of them two or three times.

The permanent garrisons of interior troops varied in size. The regimental garrisons had special units (communications, transport, medical, supply units, etc.) as well as troops. A battalion garrison consisted of platoons or companies; a company garrison consisted of 60 to 70 soldiers, and a platoon garrison of 15 to 25 soldiers. There were 62 platoons of this last type in 1946. This suggests that many were created specially for the protection of the collaborators, because a garrison of 15 to 25 soldiers was almost incapable of attacking partisans and was mainly used for back-up work (guarding, cooking, maintenance, construction work, etc.). Later, as the occupying forces became better established in the country, the number of platoon garrisons was gradually reduced in order to free more soldiers for fighting partisans. The merger of garrisons was facilitated by the better means of transport for the interior troops. With enough vehicles, a few hundred soldiers from several garrisons could reach a battlefield some 15 or 20 kilometres away within one or two hours (if put on alert, the soldiers could be ready to leave within ten or 15 minutes). By May 1951, only six out of the 42 garrisons of the four regiments of interior troops were the size of a platoon (the 34th, 261st, 298th and 353rd regiments: at that time the 32nd Riflemen's Regiment, which was a part of the disbanded 2nd Division which was afterwards included in the 4th Division, was also deployed in Lithuania; the distribution of the garrisons of this regiment at that time is unknown).[13]

The NKVD-MGB army and partisans fought in rural areas and forests; whereas the security of the puppet regime, and local authorities in towns was ensured by the many Red Army garrisons (the Soviet army from February 1946). In 1946, at least ten divisions of the Soviet army,[14] i.e. some 40,000 to 60,000 soldiers, were based in Lithuania. This army did not show much enthusiasm for fighting the partisans because it meant risk, and, besides, they were aware that chekist operations often ended by massacres of the innocent population.

During the Second World War, a special authorisation from the General Staff was required in order to use Red Army units against partisans. The military command and chekists, however, used to conclude agreements and, from time to time, issued orders for Red Army units to fight. It was not very difficult, for martial law in Lithuania lasted until July 1946, over a year after the end of the war,[15] therefore any military unit could be used for military opera-

tions. The order "Regarding the Measures for Fighting Bandits in the Territory of the District",[16] signed by the commanders of the Lithuanian-Belarusian military district on 27 March 1945, was the first of its kind, authorising the Red Army to fight against the partisans.

Two major attacks on the partisans in the war are well documented (there was a number of smaller assaults, which are mentioned by many partisans in their memoirs). The first took place between 1 and 6 September 1944, when the front line was in Žemaitija, at the River Dubysa. The Red Army took advantage of the calm at the front (the Germans had sufficient forces only for small counterattacks, while the Russians were building up their forces) and moved from 50 to 70 kilometres from west to east, searching and combing the forests, farms and towns on the way, arresting and murdering people. NKVD units extended the search line to the Belarusian border.[17] The second large operation was organised between 1 and 10 December 1944 in order to implement Directive No 0087 of the Military Council of the 3rd Belarusian Corps. By that time, there were only Germans remaining around Klaipėda. During this operation, NKVD units were supported by the Red Army and the air force. The forces moved from the coast to Kėdainiai, Kaunas, Prienai and further along the right bank of the Nemunas, searching all areas on the way. During this operation, 533 Russian soldiers (deserters, those who had fallen behind their units or those without proper documents), 1,708 civilians, among them 1,395 avoiding conscription in the Soviet army, 187 individuals without documents, and 122 suspected people and others were arrested. Twenty-five partisans were killed, and three wounded.[18] After the end of the war, individual Red Army units assisted the chekists.

The chekist leadership often decreed that at least two thirds of all soldiers should be involved daily in the struggle against the partisans; however, in reality only some 50 per cent participated (sometimes only from 25 to 30 per cent). The others rested, trained, went on leave or were ill, were assigned domestic duties, were put on guard or put under arrest, and so on. Despite that, from 3,000 to 4,000 chekists went to the forests and villages on a daily basis between 1946 and 1951 (in 1944 and 1945, from 15,000 to 20,000 soldiers fought partisans daily).

The fighting methods were brought by chekist troops from Russia. They were offensive operations, making cordons, forming reconnaissance groups,

ambushes and observation posts. Throughout the entire period of the struggle, lasting for almost ten years, only one new method was introduced, in 1950 – the chekist military groups (discussed in more detail further).

The methods applied were mainly determined by the knowledge available about the partisan group or about individual partisans. If the information was precise, or at least precise enough, operations and ambushes were carried out; if no information was available, search parties were used. The selection of the method also depended on the size of the partisan group to be attacked and the importance of the group. Especially numerous forces were drawn up for attacks on partisan headquarters.

In the first stage of the struggle, offensive operations were the most popular method. At that time the partisans were headed by former officers of the Lithuanian army. They did not know the tactics of partisan warfare and attempted to fight a positional war with the Soviet army (this included building trenches, shelters, etc.). The Soviet army, which was better armed, often used artillery and planes, and almost always won such positional battles. Having suffered heavy losses, almost all partisan groups switched to partisan tactics in late 1945. They split into small groups of three or five, gathered together only before an attack, and would split up immediately afterwards, hiding mainly in farms or bunkers deep in the forest. With these partisan tactics applied, the Russians did not organise large operations.

In the first stage of the struggle, the Soviet army organised a lot of offensive operations against the partisans. In 1945, there were 8,807,[19] and in 1946, relying on chekist data (lower-ranking officers would often confuse methods of fighting and would attribute other actions to offensive operations, such as reconnaissance groups), there were as many as 15,811.[20] However, in 1947 only 563 operations were carried out (during 529 of them some information about the partisans was available, and 34 were carried out without such information[21]) and in 1948, 515.[22] Some 500 operations annually were organised in the subsequent years, too. The number of military personnel involved in a single operation also declined. In the first years some operations involved 1,000 or more soldiers; later usually several hundred were considered enough, because with more precise data smaller areas could be encircled. However, in the early 1950s, when several groups of partisans and Western secret agents succeeded in getting into the country, extensive operations were held again. From

19 April to 29 May 1951, up to 2,000 soldiers combed the Kazlų Rūda forests in southern Lithuania, looking for the legendary partisan Juozas Lukša-Skirmantas who had returned from the West. The small forest of Punia (6 x 6km) was combed by 1,195 soldiers in May with the same purpose.[23]

Some operations were one day long, but usually they would last for several days or even weeks. Before an operation, a chain of soldiers, the so-called cordons, would surround an entire area. The soldiers in a chain would be spaced in pairs so that they could see the gap between them and the next pair and cover it with fire. If the encirclement was to continue into the night, the cordons would be made denser and the soldiers would be given signal rockets. When the surrounded area was small, the chain could be doubled. When a certain area (a district, forest, or a corner or section of one, etc.) was encircled, it would be combed by soldiers distributed in lines or in small groups. The intervals between soldiers in a line varied, but usually they were from ten to 15 metres apart. If the soldiers encountered partisans, they tried to encircle them and kill them, or to push them out of the forest into open fields where they were shot by the soldiers standing in the cordons. After one combing, sometimes they would change direction; sometimes an interval of a few days would be given between consecutive combings. Chekists were well prepared for such operations; they collected data about partisan groups active in the area, their messengers and supporters, they prepared plans not only on how to kill the partisans but also on who should be arrested or deported. One extensive operation to cover three districts was planned from 22 to 31 July 1945 in the Kaunas, Kėdainiai and Raseiniai districts, which were divided into individual zones. In addition to the forests (which were the primary target), the villages near the forests were also checked. Six regiments,[24] from 4,000 to 6,000 soldiers, and several hundred agents were engaged. In the middle of July 1946, four regiments, (from 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers) combed Biržai Forest by the Latvian border, separated from Latvia only by a small river. The forest was some 35 kilometres long and nine kilometres wide. The soldiers of two regiments went in a line from the northern part of the forest, the other two regiments from the south, thus driving the partisans into the middle. To prevent them from escaping through the sides, units were distributed on the Lithuanian side, and soldiers of the 5th MVD Division deployed in Latvia guarded the river.[25] Operations were always headed by agents, army officers only assisted them.

As has been mentioned, operations were held when they had more or less precise information on the location of partisans. They received this information from agents and informers (by 1951, 27,700 had been recruited);[26] another source of information was interrogation, including torture. When the army did not have any information, or they had to take immediate action against a small group of partisans, groups of 15 to 20 soldiers were sent. They usually worked with reconnaissance groups. Tens of thousands of such groups were sent out annually. For instance, in 1947, 72,030 groups were sent (of these 14,538 were sent out with at least general knowledge about the possible locations of partisans; and 57,492 without any information,[27] based on the intuition of the commanders of a platoon, company or reconnaissance). This means that in that year some 200 various military units were sent to the forests and villages daily. Most large offensive operations were held during the warm season, whereas the small groups were evenly distributed throughout the year. In 1948, the number of operations remained almost the same as in 1947; however, the use of small units declined by 58 per cent, to only 30,177.[28] One can only guess why this was so, but it seems that an attempt was made to achieve a similar result with less effort: groups were sent out when more precise information about the location of partisans was available and the agent network was used more efficiently. Later, in 1949 and 1950, however, the amount of groups sent out increased again.

In all the lands occupied by the Soviet Union where an armed struggle was going on (besides Lithuania, these were western Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia and western Belarus), in 1948, 71,932 groups of various types were sent out acting on information about the location of the partisan bases (among them 2,515 in offensive operations), during which 3,007 partisans were killed (72 per cent of the total number killed that year). In the same year, 194,358 attacks were organised without such information available (1,167 partisans killed,[29] or 28 per cent of the total number killed that year). Thus, seven out of ten partisans were killed as a result of information about them (in 1947, 64 per cent of the partisans were killed because of betrayal; in 1952 and 1953, almost all casualties were a result of betrayal).

In Lithuania chekists used search groups. In 1949, 30 per cent of all soldiers were involved in attacks, some 50 per cent in search groups, ten per cent in listening posts, 0.6 per cent in ambushes and five per cent escorted Soviet

officials on their trips to villages.[30] These numbers varied, however. For instance, in early 1950, only 2.3 per cent of all combatants were involved in attacks, seven per cent in search groups, five per cent in listening posts, 20 per cent in ambushes. Chekist military groups began to replace search groups only from 1951.

A *razvedovatelno poiskovaya gruppa*, a reconnaissance-search group, as described, consisted of 15 to 20 soldiers who would walk, fully equipped and ready for action, from 15 to 25 kilometres a day, usually in the daytime, looking for partisans. On encountering partisans, they would fight them. These groups travelled along forest roads and through villages near the forests.

The second most common method was the listening post. It consisted of about the same number of soldiers as search groups. Watches were arranged at the edges of forests, at crossroads, at river crossings, in other words in the spots where partisans could be expected. They were arranged at night with great secrecy. During the day the soldiers rested. Partisans who appeared within the field of observation of such groups would be shot at.

Ambushes were usually set at night in order to capture partisans alive. Strong, well-trained soldiers were selected for ambushes, usually veterans who had stayed in service. Ambushes were often arranged in houses or at farms: often the farm belonged to an agent. The agent himself informed the security forces about the expected arrival of partisans at his house.

Observation posts consisting of three to five soldiers with a radio transmitter were also often arranged in the farms of agents, usually in attics or lofts. Such posts were located also at the forest edges, near villages. Having noticed partisans, the soldiers would call the army by radio. Later, about 1949, radio beacons were distributed among the more active and clever agents.

A significant proportion of the troops were used for guard duty, as soldiers escorted various administrative officials or agents visiting rural areas. Soviet officials were escorted because they did not dare to leave the towns without armed guards. Agents were usually escorted on their visits to see other agents. It was done not only for the sake of protection but also to deceive the population and draw attention away from the agent. Usually they ordered searches in the neighbouring houses. The agent's house was also searched, and during this search information was exchanged. In the first stage of the struggle, especially during the war, about 70 per cent of all those detained were arrested

through the placing of cordons. They were also used later during searches of certain locations; their job was to stop the partisans fighting their way out of an encirclement. Cordons consisted of military patrols placed in convenient sites for miles and miles (at roads and forest edges, at crossroads, etc.), who detained all those who fell into their net.

Military personnel patrolled, escorted prisoners and carried out other tasks. Sometimes the army imitated battles with imaginary partisans and created a lot of noise in order to disguise the actions of assault agents. Chekists used assault agents dressed in partisan uniforms who pretended to act on their behalf from 1945, but from 1950 this trick was used especially often. These assailants used to approach partisans and shoot them, or captured them alive; sometimes they also killed witnesses. After such actions by the agents, the army used to stage a battle to make the people believe that it had killed the partisans itself, because the activities of these special assault agents were highly secret (assault agents killed or captured alive some 700 partisans).

As has been mentioned, the only new fighting method that Russian troops began to use in Lithuania in 1950 (it was widely used by 1951), was forming chekist military groups (*chekistko-voyskovaya gruppa*). Before 1950, a military unit fought partisans without any plan: one day here, the next day there, against that or another partisan group. Chekist military groups were made up of a permanent group of soldiers (usually consisting of ten to 30 soldiers and agents), who fought against a concrete partisan unit. The group tried to learn as much as possible about that unit: the number of partisans, their codenames, surnames, age, behaviour, methods of camouflaging and fighting, bases, signallers, supporters, and so on. Such groups continued in action until the partisan unit was eliminated. This method of struggle was very dangerous for the partisans, but as its implementation required a great effort, the army was slow to put it into practice.

Partisans themselves avoided direct battles with the army, for the sole reason that they were always outnumbered several times. When a battle broke out, hundreds of soldiers would arrive at the battlefield from various garrisons (the army was not allowed to attack partisans if their forces were not at least five times larger). They acted this way in order to make sure that no partisans would escape and that they would not have to give explanations as to why they failed. It was also an acknowledgement of the fighting spirit of the partisans,

for they seldom gave in alive; if encircled, they often fought to the bitter end. Sometimes partisans also arranged ambushes and destroyed military vehicles. Lithuanian partisans punished many local collaborators: some 10,000 of them were executed during the partisan war.

Besides the NKVD-MGB army, special paramilitary forces were formed for fighting partisans. They consisted mainly of local collaborators who were paid a salary. Between 1945 and 1953 there were from 5,000 to 8,000 such armed men, some 60 per cent of them Lithuanians. They did not evolve into a major military force, however, because there were few strong personalities among collaborators. Most of those who joined these armed formations were thieves, drunks and other disorganised individuals. Once given weapons, they were able to carry on their criminal activities. In addition to them, the Soviet police (consisting of some 4,000 men) and armed party activists (from 3,000 to 4,000) fought against the partisans. The main force fighting against the partisans and the people who supported them, who constituted the majority of the population, was the NKVD-MGB troops. It was this force that strengthened the puppet regime in Lithuania. The partisan leadership used to say that, had it not been for the army, they would have eliminated all the armed collaborator groups within a few days.

The number of partisans killed by the eight regiments of the 4th Division was as follows: 1,686 in 1946; 1,343 in 1947; 841 in 1948; and 963 in 1949.[31] According to chekist data, the total partisan casualties in these years was as follows: 2,143 in 1946; 1,540 in 1947; 1,135 in 1948; and 1,192 in 1949 (in 1950 the number of victims was 635; in 1951, 590; in 1952, 457; and in 1953 over 200[32]).Thus interior troops were responsible for 79 per cent of all partisan deaths in 1946; 87 per cent in 1947; 74 per cent in 1948; and 81 per cent in 1949. All in all, some four fifths of the partisans were killed by the troops of the Soviet interior army.

1 Lubianka Cheka-KGB, Moscow 1997, s. 43
2 Ibid, p. 46
3 Ibid, p. 47
4 *Laisvės kovų archyvas* (LKA), Kaunas 1994, No 11, p. 103
5 *Baltijos valstybės užgrobimo byla*. Vilnius 1997, p. 790
6 Vidaus reikalų ministerijos archyvas (VRMA). F. 18, ap. 1, b. 14, l. 13-14
7 Ibid, ap. 2, b. 78, l. 52
8 Lietuvos visuomenės organizacijų archyvas (LVOA). F. 1771, ap. 7, b. 91, l. 28
9 Ibid, ap. 10, b. 293, l. 4-13
10 Ibid, pp. 20-23

[11] *Lietuvos partizanų kovos ir jų slopinimas MVD-MGB dokumentuose 1944–1953 metais*. Vilnius 1996, p. 620
[12] LKA, 1992, Nr. 5, pp. 117-120
[13] Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas (LYA), F. 1, ap. 3, b. 4717, t. 1, l. 295-299
[14] LVOA, F. 1771, ap. 9, b. 267, l. 15-18
[15] Ibid, ap. 10, b. 295, l. 1
[16] A. Anušauskas, *Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas 1940–1958 metais*. Vilnius 1996, pp. 433-434
[17] LYA, F. 1, ap. 3, b. 799, l. 289-292
[18] Ibid, b. 801, l. 92
[19] VRMA, F. 142, ap. 1, b. 2, l. 96
[20] *Lietuvos partizanų kovos...*, p. 233
[21] Rusijos valstybinis karo archyvas (RVKA), F. 38650, ap. 1, b. 313, l. 36
[22] Ibid, l. 162
[23] *Lietuvos partizanų kovos...*, p. 51
[24] LYA, F. 1, ap. 18, b. 6
[25] Ibid, ap. 3, b. 2411, l. 76-77
[26] *Lietuvos partizanų kovos...*, p. 55
[27] RVKA, F. 38650, ap. 1, b. 313, l. 36
[28] Ibid, l. 162
[29] Ibid, l. 104-106
[30] LYA, F. 1, ap. 3, b. 830, l. 12-22
[31] *Genocidas ir rezistencija*. 1997 Nr. 1, p. 180
[32] *Lietuvos partizanų kovos...*, p. 620

A Comparison of the Armed Struggles for Independence in the Baltic States and Western Ukraine

ARVYDAS ANUŠAUSKAS

From 1944 to 1953, the independence movements in the western part of the Soviet Union, or the zone covered by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, organised an armed struggle against the Soviet invaders. The motives of these movements were diverse. In western Ukraine, the armed struggle for the establishment of an independent state had been going on since 1918 against all the countries which had ruled it: Poland, the Soviet Union and Germany. The struggle for the re-establishment of independence in the occupied Baltic states, which started in 1940, developed into armed resistance in 1941. Due to the geopolitical situation, the independence movements in the Baltic states saw the Soviet Union as their worst enemy. The German occupation was met by a tactic of waiting and an unarmed struggle, while the Soviet occupation was opposed with arms. The fight for independence in the Baltic states and western Ukraine between 1945 and 1953 is the subject of this article. The aim is to compare these movements on the basis of documents from the Soviet military administration.

The main instrument of suppression was the army of the Soviet Union. Although the structure of this army changed several times, its purpose remained the same – to suppress any resistance to Soviet power. During the Second World War it carried out other military tasks as well. In the period between 1942 and 1945, it detained 348,935 soldiers who had become separated from their regiments; 156,621 soldiers who had deserted the field of battle; and more than a quarter of a million people without identity papers. Following the occupation of Germany in 1945, these troops detained 144,784 Germans who had escaped internment; 242,237 people who were to be repatriated to the Soviet Union; and 53,469 former soldiers and officers of the Allied forces who were German prisoners of war.[1] It is stated in documents that during the persecution of nationalist movements between 1941 and 1946 Soviet troops killed 69,299 people involved in the armed and unarmed resistance, and detained or imprisoned 208,817 (Table 1).

Table 1

The outcome of the actions of Soviet interior troops against the armed resistance movements

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	Total
Partisan casualties	8	174	997	29,511	30,057	8,552	69,299
Captured partisans	152	2,171	9,085	50,270	119,366	27,773	208,817
Total	160	2,345	10,082	79,781	149,423	36,325	278,116

These figures are based on records of the operations of NKVD-MVD-MGB troops from 1941 to 1946 in the Military Archives of Russia, F. 38650, ap. 1, b. 313, l. 3

Following decision No 10099-ss of 4 January 1942 of the State Defence Committee, the NKVD troops were ordered to "enter the liberated cities behind the Red Army and carry out the tasks assigned to them without delay".[2] The most important was "the liquidation of the remains of political banditism and active anti-Soviet elements ..., the execution of extraordinary measures according to the duties of the MGB-MVD of the USSR and of the Soviet republics ...".[3]

The extraordinary measures first of all meant deportations. In the execution of these measures, 68,200 Karachai were deported in November 1943; 94,356 Kalmucks in December of the same year; 590,900 Chechens, Ingushes and Balkars in January and February 1944.[4] These were one-off operations. The main concern of the army was to suppress the armed anti-Soviet resistance supported by the underground and the local population. For this purpose, substantial NKVD-MGB forces were used over a long period. During the war, there were 167,000 well-armed soldiers in this army (as of 1 January 1945); later, 128,800 soldiers (as of 1 January 1946). When the Second World War ended, some of the army units were disbanded (first of all the Red Army rear defence regiments). A total of 73,700 soldiers were reserved for fighting the armed underground in the occupied Baltic states and western Ukraine. Starting from 1946, it is possible to compare the scale of the anti-Soviet underground in these countries. Permanent NKVD troops were deployed. Until 1946 a large number of NKVD troops, with a constantly changing command and active on different fronts, were deployed in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, western Ukraine and western Belarus (sometimes for very short periods of time) while fighting the armed resistance. Because they followed the front line or were sent to carry out punitive operations in recently occupied

Table 2

Suppression of armed resistance movements in 1946

	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Ukraine	Western Belarus	Total
PARTISAN DEATHS	188	214	1,584	6,526	40	8,552*
CAPTURED PARTISANS	1,587	428	4,461	19,547	1,750	27,773
PARTISAN ATTACKS:	270	696	1,840	1,619	142	4,567
acts of sabotage	6	16	24	75	–	121
MVD-MGB soldiers attacked	7	24	64	78	12	185
reprisal squads attacked	14	60	101	204	–	379
Communist Party activists attacked	60	98	350	338	46	892
offices of Soviet authorities attacked	4	16	78	50	5	153
local residents attacked	102	336	1,047	558	37	2,080
Red Army soldiers attacked	18	15	35	123	2	193
state enterprises attacked	54	117	38	103	34	346
Proclamations disseminated on military sites	5	14	103	90	6	218
LOSSES OF INTERIOR TROOPS:						
deaths	22	23	125	241	5	416
wounded	34	31	137	342	3	547
missing in action			4	4		8
Deaths among the civilian population	200	320	2,262	1,175	138	4,097

* In Poland in 1946, Soviet interior troops killed 423 and took prisoner 1,155 members of the anti-Communist underground

This table is based on information in the records "On the results of the military activities and operational situation in the sites of deployment of the troops of the MGB of the USSR" of 3 September 1947 for Latvia, 3 September for Lithuania, 4 August for Belarus, and 9 September for Ukraine. Ibid, l. 10-15

territories, they constantly changed their bases. It should be borne in mind that the NKVD formed a unified system. Thus some regiments were stationed in Moscow, but participated in suppressing the armed resistance in Lithuania or Estonia. Therefore, it is very important to assess the overall system of suppression which functioned throughout the USSR, and to compare the intensity of fighting in various countries.

In 1946 the armed resistance in the Baltic states and Ukraine was still fairly powerful. It was then that it acquired a new form. Tens of thousands of people who were living illegally or in hiding, became legitimised in 1945. Only organised groups of armed partisans remained in the woods. In suppressing the armed resistance movements, the NKVD killed over 8,000 people (Table 2).

The troops in the abovementioned territories were organised in divisions. In Lithuania, it was the 4th Riflemen's Division, in Latvia the 5th Riflemen's Division, in Estonia the 63rd Riflemen's Division (in the summer of 1946 the chief officers of the 63rd Riflemen's Division were transferred from Lithuania to Estonia, and in December 1946 it was disbanded), and in Belarus the 7th and the 10th Riflemen's Divisions. Only in Ukraine were all forces headed by a special district organisation (a similar one functioned in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia until May 1946).

There the resistance was fought by the 62nd, 65th, 81st, 82nd Riflemen's Divisions and by the 1st, 12th, 141st and 290th Motorised Riflemen's Regiments. The armed resistance was the most determined in Ukraine and Lithuania. In 1946, when the resistance was being fought by ten regiments in Lithuania, and by 17 in Ukraine, Lithuanians carried out 1,840 attacks, and Ukrainians 1,619. From this data we can see that in Lithuania and Ukraine the soldiers of the MVD-MGB and armed Soviet activists were attacked about the same number of times. In western Ukraine those who fought against the armed resistance were attacked twice as often, the Red Army three times as often. Thus, compared to Lithuania, the losses by the Red Army in western Ukraine were twice as high. On the other hand, losses among the freedom fighters in western Ukraine were four times higher than in Lithuania. In 1946, 6,526 resistance fighters were killed in Ukraine, as compared to 1,584 in Lithuania. Traitors and collaborators were treated much more severely in Lithuania: the number of party activists and NKVD-NKGB agents killed was two times higher than in western Ukraine. On the basis of this data, the conclusion can be drawn that the partisans in Lithuania were not as numerous as those in Ukraine and their losses were half those in Ukraine. This can be related to certain tactical differences. In Lithuania, attacks on regular army units were rare, while Soviet activists were attacked fairly frequently.

Meanwhile, state enterprises were attacked twice as often in Latvia and one and a half times as often in Estonia as they were in Lithuania. This shows that there the base of the armed resistance in the rural areas was much weaker. The armed resistance in Lithuania resorted to those tactics three years later, when deportations, arrests and killings considerably weakened or even did away with support among the civilian population. Another result of the comparison shows

Table 3

Suppression of the armed resistance movements in 1947

	Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania	Ukraine	Western Belarus	Total
PARTISAN DEATHS	39	106	1,344	4,136	60	5,685
PARTISANS TAKEN PRISONER	158	305	3,679	16,830	425	21,397
NUMBER OF ATTACKS	16	60	674	2,319	39	3,108
PARTISAN ATTACKS:	52	151	1,333	1,603	90	3,229
terrorist acts	26	74	877	1,066	25	2,068
Number of casualties	30	66	2,307	1,962	109	4,474
of which MVD-MGB soldiers	6	6	56	233	7	299
party activists	8	24	275	770	26	1,104
local residents	16	36	1,976	959	76	3,071
CASUALTIES IN ACTION AMONG THE TROOPS:						
dead	2	6	98	266	3	375
wounded	1	15	120	380	5	538

This table is based on an account of the activities of the troops of the MGB of the USSR. Ibid, l. 29

that in 1946 the number of freedom fighters killed in Latvia (214) was seven times lower than in Lithuania (1,584), although the number of assaults was only three times lower. This could mean that the Latvians were acting in smaller groups and more secretively than the Lithuanians. In Estonia the number of freedom fighters killed (188) was similar to that in Latvia (214), except that the number of attacks was two and a half times lower. This shows the different nature of the armed resistance in Estonia: a low intensity of fighting and high level of conspiracy. In 1947 the proportions were similar (Table 3).

In the armed resistance in 1947, in the areas occupied by the Soviet Union, only Lithuania and western Ukraine can be compared in scale and intensity. The number of freedom fighters killed in Lithuania was three times lower than in Ukraine, although the number of partisan attacks in both countries was very similar (1,333 and 1,603 respectively). The Lithuanian freedom fighters were especially hard on collaborators and traitors. The number of those sentenced to death by partisan courts was twice as high in Lithuania (1,977 and 959). The armed resistance in Latvia in 1947 differed in scale from that in Lithuania by nine to 15 times, according to all figures (losses in action against the MVD-MGB troops). The movement in Estonia was from three to four times smaller than in Latvia. Both in Latvia and Estonia casualties among the

civilian population were mainly accidental. Neither agents nor collaborators were persecuted. During partisan attacks in 1947, 36 people were killed in Latvia and 16 in Estonia. The losses among party activists and officers of the MVD-MGB in these countries were the same or slightly higher than among civilians, i.e. MVD-MGB agents or simply accidental victims of the partisan war. In western Ukraine this proportion was similar: 1,300 armed Soviet activists and MVD-MGB officials and soldiers, and 959 civilians were killed there. In Lithuania the ratio was 4:1 to the disadvantage of civilians. This shows considerable differences in tactics and methods of fighting which will have to be researched.

There exists another aspect of the resistance. To inflict the gravest losses on the enemy was one of the central aims of the armed resistance. It showed the might and the ability to master the tactics of a partisan war of each fighting party. Official MGB statistics stated that the ratio of troop losses to killed and captured freedom fighters in 1947 was 1:64. The picture would be completely different if only truly irreversible losses were compared. In Lithuania in 1946, the 25th Riflemen's Regiment, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Golyshev, lost 37 soldiers and killed 270 partisans;[5] the 32nd Regiment, under Lieutenant Colonel Shirinsky, lost 14 soldiers and killed 137 partisans.[6] In 1947, the 261st Riflemen's Regiment, headed by Colonel Zakurdayev, killed 65 partisans and lost six soldiers in 31 engagements; and in 1948 killed 41 partisans and lost 13 soldiers in 22 engagements.[7] Such examples are abundant, because the action was very frequent. According to the records of the 4th Riflemen's Division, in 1948 the division engaged in action 533 times against Lithuanian partisans (Table 4), where 841 partisans were killed and 2,470 taken prisoner (an annual MGB report indicates that 1,135 partisans were killed and 1,338 taken prisoner). The losses of the division itself amounted to 59 soldiers and officers killed, and 89 wounded (another 36 were killed and 95 wounded in extraordinary cases).[8] NKVD soldiers were killed or wounded in every fourth encounter. Comparing the losses of each side, we should not forget that almost half of all partisans killed were the victims of betrayal by MGB-MVD agents. Even in those cases, the outcome of armed engagements could not be determined in advance. Almost always, sudden attacks by the partisans were successful. If, in the course of combat, the partisans did not force the NKVD forces to retreat, the latter would leave the partisans alone,

Table 4

Casualties in 1948

	Ukraine	Lithuania	Latvia, Estonia
	62nd, 65th,81st, 82nd Riflemen's Divisions	4th Riflemen's Division	5th Riflemen's Division
NUMBER OF ENGAGEMENTS	1,929	533	106
NUMBER OF PARTISANS KILLED	3,057	841	178
TAKEN PRISONER	10,758	2,470	558
CASUALTIES SUFFERED BY THE ARMY			
1) killed	206	59	8
2) wounded	259	89	21
NON-MILITARY CASUALTIES SUFFERED BY THE ARMY:			
1) killed	67	36	7
2) wounded	131	95	13

This table is based on records of military activity in 1948 by the 4th and 5th Riflemen's Divisions of the MGB interior army of the USSR, in Ukraine. Ibid, l. 108, 154, 162

even with inconsiderable losses. The NKVD forces were not always able to carry out the order of 7 February 1946, issued by the chief of the NKVD army of the Baltic region, Major General Golovka: "to use chekist techniques to find the enemy..., to track it down and hold it in control, and to destroy it in the event of opposition."[9]

There are many pages still to be turned in the story of the partisan struggle for independence. In their fight against the totalitarian state, the anti-Soviet resistance movements both in Ukraine and the Baltic countries relied mostly on the support of their people, their patriotism and their immense desire for independence. These movements were the first powerful blows to the communist regime and, at the same time, an armed rebuff to the politics of genocide.

1 Records of operations of NKVD-MVD-MGB troops from 1941 to 1946. Rusijos valstybinis karo archyvas (RVKA), F. 38650, ap. 1, b. 313, l. 2-3

2 Ibid, l. 6

3 Ibid, l. 6, 9

4 Ibid, l. 8

5 Certificate of 10 February 1948 on military and operational activities, extraordinary cases and non-military losses of the 25th Riflemen's Regiment. Ibid, l. 73

6 Certificate on military and operational activities, extraordinary cases and non-military losses of the 32nd Riflemen's Regiment. Ibid, l. 74

[7] Certificate on the fighting and operational activities, extraordinary cases and non-military losses of the 261st Riflemen's Regiment. Ibid, l. 77; certificate on military activities in 1948 of the 4th Riflemen's Division. Ibid, l. 172

[8] Certificate on military activities of the 4th Riflemen's Division. Ibid, l. 162

[9] Major General Golovka's order No 1/0 00567 of 27 February 1946. Ibid, F. 38650, ap. 1, b. 146, l. 13

The Contacts between the Lithuanian Resistance and the West

DALIA KUODYTĖ

The title of this paper defines the subject under review: the contacts of the leaders and governing bodies of the resistance in Lithuania with organisations in the West. The use of the term "the West" reflects the essence of the matter. This is that the interests of émigrés were coordinated with those of a third party, the British, American and Swedish secret intelligence services, and sometimes the latter would take precedence. In Lithuania, the pattern was somewhat different, but even here we have to take into account the activities of the MGB-KGB in this area: in other words, the specific aims which were achieved in this operation. Analysing the contacts as a process, looking at the diversity of the plans, needs and interests, and assessing the effectiveness of their implementation, we arrive at a picture of the driving forces and imperatives.

The period under review is between 1944 and 1953. During this decade the country was the site of fierce armed resistance. The international situation was unstable: the occupied countries were waiting either for the outcome of the peace talks or for total war; while countries in the West were recovering, and formulating new spheres of influence and interest.

In order to gain a better understanding of the armed resistance against the Soviets, and of the sources of the issue under discussion, we must look back to late 1943 and early 1944. The period of the Nazi occupation was when the basis of the ideological and political resistance was formed, and it was then that, based on the party principle, the Vyriausiasis Lietuvos išlaisvinimo komitetas (VLIK, Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania) was established, and the idea was born that the Lietuvos laisvės armija (LLA, Lithuanian Liberation Army) would put up an armed resistance. Concrete measures were taken for its implementation.

Finally, the issue of the continuity of the tradition of resistance that arose during the years of the Nazi occupation and continued into the post-war years is also important.

Late in 1943, after negotiations which had lasted for six months, all the anti-Nazi resistance organisations arrived at an agreement and the VLIK[1] was founded. It was based on the Vyriausiasis lietuvių komitetas (VLK, Chief Lithuanian Committee), which united non-church groups and organisations, and on the Tautos Taryba (TT, Council of the Nation), uniting Christian groups. The Social Democrat Steponas Kairys became the chairman of the VLIK.

This organisation did not exist for long, only until May 1944 when the mass arrests started. It cannot be said that the VLIK was an entirely formal and inactive organisation; it must be stated, however, that it did not fulfil its main function – it did not create a strategy for the second Soviet occupation, even though everybody spoke of the possibility of it and the necessity for resistance. On the other hand, one can hardly claim that the ideas of the VLIK about the forms of the struggle or the possibilities of war, published in the underground press, incited, according to Karolis Drunga,[2] a spontaneous armed resistance. Apart from the VLIK, there were other organisations in Lithuania which offered ways of settling the problem.

The most important feature of this organisation was the clear divisions between its parts. These were determined not by political criteria, but by other values: Catholics and non-Catholics, and later liberals, stood out in the organisation. It is possible that these disagreements, transferred to politics and beyond the borders of Lithuania, became the basis for discord.

The leaders of the Lietuvių frontas (LF, Lithuanian Front) and the Lietuvos laisvės kovotojų sąjunga (LLKS, Union of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters) stood out very distinctly. The antagonism between these organisations and their members determined many aspects of the issue.

In the summer of 1944, when Lithuania was occupied by Soviet troops, practically no members of these organisations remained in the country (except for one member of the War Council of the VLIK, General Motiejus Pečiulionis).[3] Some of them had already been taken to Nazi concentration camps, others had retreated with the front line. Therefore, it is possible to say that emigration embraced not only people, but also organisations, and, together with them, party ideas and ideologies. This is also proved by the setting up of armed resistance structures. When such a structure was being created in the Kęstutis region, a discussion on party issues arose during the inaugural conference,[4] where, among other things, it was recorded: "Aidas [Petras

Paulaitis, a former member of the LF – D.K.] stated that, as a military organisation, it has to work together, but as a political one it has to accommodate differing views, although at present it is not crucial to define these differences. The groups which are now abroad and are going to return will influence the crucial decisions in any case. Angis [Juozas Kasperavičius, a former officer in the Lithuanian army, member of the LLA, and chief of the Kęstutis region – D.K.] said that the groups abroad cannot represent the whole Lithuanian nation as, according to what we know, they are not united and might even have a negative influence." This discussion took place in the autumn of 1946 and was the only recorded one on that issue.

The VLIK was re-established in Germany, first in Berlin (as a foreign delegation), and later in the autumn of 1944 and early 1945 in Würzburg. After prolonged discussions as to whether an organisation founded as an underground one and re-established in exile on the same principles could lead the whole émigré community, or even carry out the functions of a government in exile, the VLIK was eventually re-established according to the old party principle. It included the Christian Democrats, the Social Democrats, the National Party, the People's Party, the Labour Federation, the Catholic Union of Farmers, the Lithuanian Front, patriots, freedom fighters, the Unity Movement, and the liberal Farmers' Party.[5] Mykolas Krupavičius, a priest and a representative of the Christian Democrats, was elected chairman. The composition of the organisation led to disagreements among its members over the leading positions, the admission of new members, and finally over the government in exile, the constitution and other similar issues. It seemed that the VLIK was doomed to suffer from disagreement.

Understanding the complexity of the situation, and its negative impact upon the public, Krupavičius wrote in 1946: "Those who think along the same lines as me are of the opinion that Lithuanian political parties have nothing to do overseas, that the VLIK as a political organisation is the soil for all parties. The public, however, should be left in peace. Others hold a different view. The party membership became stronger in exile. The left were the first to organise themselves, the Front [Lietuvių frontas – D.K.] are keeping up with them. The Party of Freedom Fighters is very active and aggressive, and the National Party are following in their footsteps. The Christian Democrats have not yet started organisational work, but, in the light of these facts, they

will have to keep up with the others."[6] Krupavičius was right when he said that the bickering among the parties should not influence the public. However, it not only influenced the public in exile, but also transferred to Lithuania (another issue is to what extent it found a favourable environment in Lithuania).

In this context, the first trip by Jonas Deksnys (a member of the LLKS) and Klemensas Brunius (a member of the Lithuanian Nationalist Party) from Germany to Lithuania in the summer of 1945 was interpreted different ways. What is in no doubt is that, in starting any activities in exile, information on the state of affairs in the country was indispensable. On the other hand, with rumours spreading about the supremacy of the resistance movement in Lithuania in the struggle in general, such information and especially authorisation received in the country could provide obvious political superiority in exile. This trip tried to achieve both aims, but, as subsequent events showed, the second aim was far more important.

Another interesting version confirming the abovementioned statement is presented by Jonas Pajaujis: "When Germany capitulated and the VLIK started acting more effectively, J.D. [Jonas Deksnys – D.K.] could not be admitted to the VLIK due to his behaviour under Nazi arrest [Deksnys was accused of denouncing members of the VLIK to the Gestapo – D.K.]. Thus his ambition was thwarted, and he began separatist actions. First of all, he contacted offices in the US, but did not get any support. Later he made contact with the British: that is when his first trip with Brn [Brunius – D.K.] took place. On his return, he did not have anything concrete for the resistance in the country. The Union of Freedom Fighters wanted to make him a member of the VLIK, but it fell through. Because of that J.D. was even more offended."[7]

Such detailed enquiries into the first trip behind the Iron Curtain are not incidental: at that time idealism, the nation's aspirations to freedom, party and personal ambitions determined the nature of contacts with Lithuania.

It is important in that already the secret services of the Western countries were looking for possibilities to get information from the Soviet Union. Their efforts became especially active in late 1945, when Deksnys returned from Lithuania.

When they arrived in Lithuania in the early autumn of 1945, Deksnys and Brunius found rapidly growing resistance structures: the inaugural conference of the Tauras region had already taken place in Skardupiai,[8] a strong region A

led by Colonel Juozas Vitkus-Kazimieraitis functioned in Dzūkija, and the Vytis region in Aukštaitija. In Žemaitija, where the influence of the LLA was the strongest, a structural reorganisation was under way and new structural units were formed. It was very natural that the representatives of the West should appear in southern Lithuania. Here the armed resistance was strongest both from an organisational and a representational point of view.

Late in November 1945, Deksnys and Brunius met with the chief of region A (in Dzūkija), Colonel Vitkus-Kazimieraitis. The problems discussed and agreements achieved at this meeting are set forth in the minutes of 28 November signed by Kazimieraitis.[9] This document contains several interesting things. The visitors from the West are named as representatives of the diplomatic service of Lithuania, although they were not. Judging from the way they described the political situation among the émigrés, it is possible to claim that they considered themselves representatives of the Lithuanian diplomatic service. If they had introduced themselves as members of the VLIK, they would have surrendered the initiative to a political enemy. From the conclusions given in the document, it becomes evident that at the time neither side had concrete plans for the nature of the representation and leadership in the liberation of Lithuania. The three-tier system, with the functions of representation, political administration and military leadership, which they had suggested, was hardly rational at the time. According to their idea, the VLIK had to be removed from the political leadership and left with the function of representation along with the diplomatic service functioning in the West. This can already be seen as a need to establish a new organisation which, having authority over the country, would prevent the VLIK from maintaining contacts with Lithuania. That is what was done half a year later, when the Vyriausiasis Lietuvos atstatymo komitetas (VLAK, Supreme Committee for the Re-Establishment of Lithuania) and Bendras demokratinis pasipriešinimo sąjūdis (BDPS, General Democratic Resistance Movement) were founded.

Relations between Deksnys, Brunius and their comrades with the VLIK became even more complicated after their return to Germany. At the abovementioned meetings, Deksnys emphasised the supremacy of the country (in fact, this was not precisely stated in the document), juxtaposing it against the claims of the VLIK to become a government in exile. Relations worsened when the VLIK refused Deksnys the right to represent the LLKS in

the organisation. There appeared two rival groups, each carrying out its own policy on all levels and maintaining its own contacts with the resistance in the country. As has been mentioned above, late in 1945 relations between Deksnys and the British secret service acquired a concrete form. Stasys Žymantas, a member of the LLKS, organised a meeting with Alexander McKibbin, who in 1945 was appointed to coordinate espionage operations in the Baltic states.[10] Another member of the LLKS, a former official at the embassy in Stockholm, Vladas Žilinskas, had known him before 1940.

Having obtained information about the first trip to Lithuania, McKibbin not only outlined the opportunities for advancing his own interests, but also tried to assure priority for other secret services. They tried to persuade the Lithuanians that their cause had not been forgotten and that they were not being solved simply due to reasons beyond their control.

Both this meeting and the possibilities and purposes of the second trip to Lithuania were discussed at the meeting of LLKS leaders which took place in Lübeck in April 1946.[11] With the emphasis on the importance of relations with the British, a decision was made to give political and military expression to the resistance in Lithuania. This point of view can be explained by the abovementioned circumstances: the information about the situation in the country was very superficial, and the possibility that the partisan leaders in Lithuania might have their own opinion is not even mentioned.

When in May 1946 Deksnys and Vytautas Stanevičius got to Lithuania through Poland, they saw that the situation had changed completely. After the first meeting with the representatives from the West, centralising activities in southern Lithuania gathered pace. Following an agreement between the chiefs of the Tauras and Dainava regions, the southern Lithuanian partisan region was established.[12] It was not yet a central command to represent all the country's partisans, as it was later portrayed in the West by Deksnys. This is confirmed by the fact that in the autumn of 1946 the leadership of the Kęstutis apygarda (region), which was being established and gaining in strength, expressed an independent and very negative attitude to the "importing of ideas".[13] The concept of full sovereignty of the country, that is the right to decide and choose the form of centralisation, military leadership and political representation, which was voiced in the letter by the chief of the Kęstutis region, Juozas Kasperavičius-Visvydas, became the foundation for the work of the partisan leadership.

The MGB held information about the first visit of Western representatives, although it was delayed by recruited messengers. In July 1946, a case named "West" was opened in the 2nd Department of the MGB of the Lithuanian SSR.[14] The certificate of 20 August 1946 on the aim of the case states: "In 1945 and 1946, the MGB of the LSSR uncovered and liquidated several committees and commands which attempted to unite military units and nationalist organisations in Lithuania. Among these were the LLA, the Lithuanian Union of Partisans, the VLIK, the Council for the Liberation of the Nation, and others. Seeking assistance from foreign reactionary circles (first of all English and American), these groups attempted to establish contacts with Lithuanian émigré centres in Anglo-American zones in Germany and Sweden. In their turn, Lithuanian nationalist émigré organisations attempted to make contact with anti-Soviet organisations in Lithuania.

"Taking this into account, we decided to take over the communication channels, to infiltrate our agency both into the nationalist units in Lithuania and the centres functioning abroad, in order to divide and liquidate the armed gangs".[15] As can be seen from this document, the central emphasis of the plan fell on the armed resistance and its liquidation, unlike in 1949 and 1950, when priority was given to the actions against Western secret services, while Lithuanians both in the country and abroad were used only as middlemen.

In the spring of 1946 the MGB, making use of the remnants of the Lithuanian National Council, brought in its agent Noreika, Juozas Markulis (known in the underground under the name of Erelis, "Eagle"),[16] in Operation Cerberiai (Cerberuses), directed against the Didžiosios Kovos apygarda. After it was completed, Aukštaitija recognized the leading role of the "committee". Agent Noreika approached the leadership of the southern Lithuanian region exactly at the time when Deksnys arrived in Lithuania.

During a meeting on 31 May 1946, the decisions of the Lübeck meeting were adopted by Deksnys' efforts: a unified leadership for the resistance, its authority and, most important, its subordination to a political body.[17] These ideas were implemented by establishing the BDPS on 6 June and VLAK on 11 June. It is interesting that, speaking at a meeting of partisan leaders on 17 June, Deksnys presented himself as a representative of the VLIK, authorised to transfer the focus of the struggle to Lithuania. He proposed that a political centre, the VLAK, should be established for this purpose, and that the VLIK

should be liquidated. Without making a detailed analysis of the signed declarations, it is possible to identify a number of entirely independent aims: along with the issue of centralisation, the partisan leaders were concerned about procuring the assistance of émigré organisations; while Deksnys was solving the political problems of the LLKS, the possibility of generating stronger interest by the British secret service being among them. Being aware that the MGB agent Markulis (Erelis) was chairman of the VLAK, we can see a whole range of deciding factors. We can also say that all interested parties achieved their aims to a greater or lesser extent, as was said in a certificate by Senior Lieutenant Kureras, after the discovery of the "West" case and Operation Cerberiai, when 178 partisans were arrested and 18 killed.[18] By establishing the Ginkluotųjų partizanų štabas (GPŠ, Command of Armed Partisans), the partisan leadership hoped to speed up the process of centralisation. In part, it worked: for instance, a communications system was set up.

At a meeting of the partisan leaders in January 1947 where it was clearly spelt out that Markulis (Erelis) was an agent, the VLAK was actually abolished, and a decision was made to exercise political leadership through the BDPS presidium, giving priority to the partisan leadership. Thus the real situation in the country adapted the ideas and plans of Deksnys and his colleagues, and a direct impact of the MGB on the armed resistance was avoided. Yet this meeting was significant in that it emphasised the importance of contacts with the West, and planned a trip for Lithuanian representatives to the West with the purpose of supplying direct information on the situation in the country, as well as finding out about the processes which were taking place there.

Meanwhile Deksnys, armed with minutes, declarations and authorisations to found foreign delegations of the VLAK and BDPS, and accompanied by an official of the 1st Department of the MGB of the LSSR, L. Maksimov, returned via Poland to the West. Late in 1946 and early in 1947, meetings with representatives of the Swedish and British secret services took place, where the possibilities for supplying them with intelligence from Lithuania and issues of receiving material aid were discussed.[19]

A meeting of the leaders of the VLIK and the LLKS took place in Kirchheim on 17 January 1947 (simultaneously with a meeting of partisan leaders in Lithuania). The issue of the establishment of a VLAK foreign delegation was

discussed. Quite naturally, the representatives of the VLIK rejected the necessity for a new organisation. They asked why the proposed functions could not be executed through the VLIK, the more so that from the point of view of both structure and aims it would have been quite logical.[20] In short, failing to abolish the VLIK, a campaign was started against it, questioning all of its functions and aiming at pushing it out of the political arena. Even Stasys Lozoraitis, the head of the diplomatic service in exile, was involved in this campaign, and the conflict with the VLIK leadership regarding the representation of Lithuania on the international arena deepened.

With such a fierce struggle going on, the representatives of Lithuania in the West were not popular with Deksnys. That was why, having met J. Lukša and Jurgis Krikščiūnas in Poland in the spring of 1947, he just took the information they had brought and did not show any interest in the rest of their trip.

In August 1947 Deksnys and Algirdas Vokietaitis met Lozoraitis. This trip was supported and funded by the British and Swedish secret services.[21] Later, at a meeting between Lozoraitis, Šaulys and Krupavičius, it was pointed out that "these men [Deksnys and Vokietaitis] ... did not say a single foolish thing and made a serious and positive impression. The reproaches made to them did not prove correct ... and there is no reason not to trust them ..."[22] However, early in 1948, one of the diplomats, Dr. Šaulys, wrote a letter to Lozoraitis, saying: "... I am not sure if the representation of our resistance abroad provides us with a full picture of its activities and with its real attitudes. Even if we agree that this representation does show the real situation, I am very dubious that the opinions expressed by this representation are not inspired by the representation itself, in its opposition to the VLIK and aspiring to its own aims ..."[23]

Lukša and Pyplys, authorised representatives of the BDPS presidium in Lithuania, appeared in Stockholm early in 1948. Although they brought confirmation of the authorisation of Deksnys as the representative of the resistance,[24] judging from the tasks they were charged with, their trust in him had already been questioned. This explains the authorisation of the representatives: they were instructed to meet not only with Deksnys and his colleagues, but also with members of the foreign delegation, with representatives of the secret services and the leadership of the VLIK. The most important, and, it seems, the hardest to carry out, was the following task: "Finding that

the VLIK's activities are incompatible with the activities of the foreign delegation and those of the BDPS presidium member, Prapuolenis, attempts should be made to coordinate and set out the relations and responsibilities, on behalf of the fighting Lithuanian nation."[25] Having found themselves in the epicentre of the political struggle, the representatives of Lithuania eventually understood.

It is hard to believe that Deksnys would have tried to bring delegates to Sweden if he had not expected any personal benefit. When he introduced them to an officer in the Swedish secret service, O. Liljenberg, and in 1948 found them accommodation in Stockholm, Deksnys hoped to keep their arrival secret and somehow prevent them from meeting the "Catholics". Of course, that was a mistake. The representatives of the country, feeling isolated, started looking themselves for contacts to help them to act according to their instructions. Assisted by Jonas Pajaujis, their old acquaintance residing in Sweden, they got in touch with the VLIK leadership and agreed to meet.

From 7 to 9 July 1948, a meeting took place in Baden-Baden. Its decisions can hardly be seen as logical if one is unaware of the context. The meeting was attended by the heads of the VLIK and its executive board, Krupavičius, Prof. Jonas Kaminskas, Vaclovas Sidzikauskas and Juozas Brazaitis on one side; and by Skrajūnas (Lukša), special commissioner of the BDPS presidium, and Deksnys, the representative of the Lithuanian underground abroad (a member of the VLAK and the BDPS presidium).[26] The participation of Deksnys in this meeting could only be explained by his unwillingness to lose sight of Lukša and his influence on him. The meeting decided that the action for the liberation of Lithuania abroad should be headed by the VLIK and its executive board, which had the right to form a government in exile, and reserve a place in it for a representative from Lithuania. In Lithuania this action was to be led by a group uniting the resistance. Contact was maintained through an authorised representative of the underground.[27] No real agreement was reached on the issue of the VLAK and the foreign delegation of the BDPS. Such an agreement could not have been reached. The foreign delegation of the VLAK stopped functioning late in 1947, therefore a decree on its suspension had no sense, and, as for the foreign delegation of the BDPS, which was founded on 7 December 1947, Deksnys talked about it evasively, and that is understandable. Nobody had

authorised him to negotiate its fate or to settle the issue of its suspension, even if he considered himself a representative of both delegations. After this meeting the situation changed radically: in August 1948 Lukša left for Paris, and, according to Deksnys, assisted by the diplomat Stasys Bačkis, got in touch with the French secret service. The foreign delegation of the BDPS was in crisis. Following Directive No 2 of 26 September 1948, Deksnys demanded the suspension of its activities.[28] When a conflict among former comrades flared up, Deksnys was temporarily excluded from the foreign delegation of the BDPS. Besides, there was a danger that Lukša would reach Lithuania faster and, by disclosing his plan, would completely compromise the foreign delegation of the BDPS and Deksnys himself.

All these conflicts attracted the attention of the secret services. In the spring and summer of 1948, McKibbin, through Žilinskas, not only expressed his interest in all events, but also clearly formulated his demands: "... intelligence, within the scope of the plan presented to Lukša and Krikščiūnas in Gdynia in the spring of 1947 ... would like to enquire whether the Lithuanian underground could find a reliable person in Molotovsk ... are resolute to assist in the future, if, of course, the underground supplies information, according to the principle of give and take."[29] Thus, in the autumn of 1948, preparations were made to transfer Deksnys' group to Lithuania. The operation was to be organised by the British Secret Intelligence Service and supported by the Swedes.[30] The SIS determined the nature of the operation. The interests of the country, of émigré organisations and Deksnys were not central here (although they were not ignored either).

Although the senior partisan leadership led by Jonas Žemaitis-Vytautas was established in Lithuania in February 1949 – the whole organisation was called Lietuvos laisvės kovos sąjūdis (LLKS, Lithuanian Movement for the Fight for Freedom) – and documents were drawn up regulating its activities, the situation was gradually worsening. The communications system was relentlessly undermined, and the command on all levels was liquidated. Hopes of a war or real assistance from the West were buried, and even the issue of contact with the West was no longer emphasised as one of the most important. Lukša (Skrajūnas), who returned from the West in 1950, prepared exhaustive information on the execution of his duties in the West, but he was killed in the autumn of 1951 and did not manage to meet Vytautas. Other

members of his group were killed or recruited and used in MGB "games", including those with the West. However, they were inferior in scope to the game which took place after the arrest and recruitment of Deksnys.

When Deksnys' group landed on the Lithuanian coast in May 1949, it was trapped in a well-prepared ambush. Everybody was arrested, except K. Pyplys-Mažytis, who separated from the group and set off for Suvalkija. This moment marked the beginning of the so-called games between Western intelligence services and the MGB, which had nothing to do with the Lithuanian underground. This is confirmed by the fact that the BDPS, which in fact no longer existed, was mentioned in MGB misinformation. Two operations were started by the MGB: Volna (Wave) in 1949, and Lyes (Forest) in 1950. The aim of the latter was formulated as follows: "The central task in this case is to mislead the British intelligence service, through fictitious 'opportunities' in the Soviet Union, and track down their agency. ... Not to relate Lyes with Volna, so that if difficulties arise on one line of communication, it will still be possible to preserve the potential for observing the American and British intelligence services."[31]

This game was won by the Soviet special services, which for several years managed to lead the British by the nose, and, through misleading information, forced the dispatch of agents to the Baltic states (at least six groups were sent), which compromised the émigré organisations of the Baltic states (in 1955, the VLIK had to relocate to the USA). McKibbin, who was in charge of this programme, was forced to resign.

In a broad sense, the contacts of the Lithuanian resistance with the West were important for several reasons. First of all, they were linked to the hope of a military conflict: to a large extent, the resistance was led by former army officers who understood very well that only in this case could the partisan war end in victory. On the other hand, the part of the population which left for the West was usually called the cream of the nation: in other words, these people generated, at least during the years of the Nazi occupation, the idea of resistance, and led resistance organisations. It was these people, natural leaders, that the resistance lacked during the first post-war years and when even the smallest possibility to get in touch with them arose, it was exploited. In general, it can be said that none of the hopes of the fighting country were fulfilled.

[1] L. Mockūnas, *Pavargęs herojus* (*Jonas Deksnys trijų žvalgybų tarnyboje*). *Baltos lankos*. Vilnius 1997, p. 84

[2] Ibid, p. 92

[3] Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas (LYA), F. K-1, ap. 8, b. 5, l. 131

[4] *Jungtinės Kęstučio apygardos štabo posėdžio, kuriame svarstytos apygardos kūrimo galimybės, protokolas Nr. 1. Laisvės kovų archyvas* (LKA), Kaunas 1994, No 12, pp. 24-28

[5] L. Mockūnas, op cit, p. 109

[6] Letter from Mykolas Krupavičius to Jonas Pajaujis, dated 26 August 1946 (Eskilstuna, Sweden). Personal archive of Jonas Pajaujis

[7] "Liečia J.D." Undated and unauthorized document, ibid

[8] *Tauro partizanų steigiamojo apygardos štabo archyvo posėdžio, vykusio 1945 m. liepos 19 d. Skardupių klebonijoje, protokolas Nr. 1*. LKA, Kaunas 1991, No 1, p. 6

[9] Ibid, p. 8

[10] L. Mockūnas, op cit, p. 140

[11] Ibid, p. 141

[12] *Lietuvos partizanų "Tauro" apygardos vadų ir apygardos vadų posėdžio, įvykusio 1946 m. balandžio mėn. 9 d. protokolas Nr. 1*. LKA, No 1, p. 10

[13] N. Gaškaitė, D. Kuodytė, A. Kašėta, B. Ulevičius, *Lietuvos partizanai 1944–1953 m*. Kaunas 1996 (a supplement to *Laisvės kovų archyvas*), pp. 243-248

[14] Lietuvos partizanų kovos ir jų slopinimas MVD-MGB dokumentuose 1944–1953 metais. Collected documents. Edited by N. Gaškaitė, A. Kašėta, J. Starkauskas. 1996, p. 523

[15] Ibid

[16] Ibid

[17] L. Mockūnas, op cit, p. 151

[18] A. Anušauskas, *Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas 1940–1958 metais*. Vilnius 1996, p. 303

[19] L. Mockūnas, op cit, pp. 195-207

[20] "Liečia J.D." Personal archive of J. Pajaujis

[21] L. Mockūnas, op cit, p. 223

[22] Ibid, p. 225

[23] "Liečia J.D." Personal archive of J. Pajaujis

[24] *Laisvės kovos 1944–1953 metais*. Collected documents. Edited by D. Kuodytė and A. Kašėta, 1996, p. 464

[25] Ibid, p. 466

[26] Ibid, p. 489

[27] Ibid, p. 491

[28] "Liečia J.D." Personal archive of J. Pajaujis

[29] L. Mockūnas, op cit, p. 316

[30] Ibid, p. 320

[31] *Lietuvos partizanų kovos ir jų slopinimas MVD-MGB dokumentuose 1944–1953 metais*, p. 574

The Resistance of the Church to the Soviet Regime from 1944 to 1967

ARŪNAS STREIKUS

Ever since the Counter-Reformation, the Catholic Church has played an important role in the history of Lithuania. This was especially so in the 20th century, as in the formation of modern national consciousness the clergy were an important part of the Lithuanian elite. Numerous works of modern history point out the important role of the Church in the formation of the relatively strong resistance to the Soviet occupation.[1] Nobody, however, has so far attempted to offer a more exhaustive explanation of this, and to show the direct influence of the Church on the resistance movement. This is one of the central aims of this paper, which will be carried out by revealing the attitude of the Church towards the Soviet regime and the changes in that approach, the relations of the Church with the underground, and the forms of resistance to the anti-clerical policies of the Soviet regime. The period under examination ends with the year 1967, because the following year marked the beginning of a new stage in the role of the Church in the resistance movement.

I. THE CHURCH AND THE ARMED RESISTANCE

When, in the second half of 1944, the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania for the second time, the Church, like the Lithuanian public, found itself in a complicated situation. Passive resistance, which had manifested itself quite actively during the years of the German occupation, shaped the strong hope that the possible return of the Soviets would not last long, and that Western countries would not abandon the Baltic states. The faith in this possibility was strengthened by the more fierce aggression of the Soviet power than in 1940 and 1941. Most priests, especially in the provinces, also maintained the hope of a rapid change in the situation. Because of this, many men, in an attempt to defend their families and themselves, left for the woods with weapons in their hands. Although the priests did not encourage this process, they, perceiving very well the reasons behind the retreat to the woods, could not, especially in villages, help assisting the partisans spiritually, and sometimes materially as well.

Very few priests contributed directly to the strengthening and expansion of the partisan struggle. Among these, mention should first of all be made of Justinas Lelešius, who was chaplain to the partisans of the Tauro region and considered the armed resistance an inevitable precondition for winning independence. Meanwhile, other priests, who left a deeper imprint on the post-war struggle for freedom, tried to emphasise the political aspect of it. One of the founders of the Tauro apygarda (region), Father Antanas Ylius, tried to establish an all-Lithuanian political organisation of partisans to fight for the liberation of Lithuania, while partisans saved their energy for a possible war.[2] Early in 1947, Father Juozas Stankūnas was a member of the presidium of the Bendras demokratinis pasipriešinimo sąjūdis (BDPS, General Democratic Resistance Movement), established by the chief of the Tauro region, Antanas Baltūsis, and wrote the famous appeal of the Catholic Church of Lithuania to Pope Pius XII. The appeal described how the Soviet authorities restricted the activities of the Church, enumerated acts of repression against the clergy and asked for assistance and approval for the fighting. However, the position of the majority of the country's ordinary priests regarding the armed resistance is best described by the words of the émigré historian V.S. Vardis: "With very few exceptions, the majority of priests can be described as sympathetic supporters who, when asked, would provide the partisans with religious services, although not at all convinced that the armed resistance had a chance of winning or that this was the most suitable way of achieving its aims."[3]

The position of the Church hierarchy was slightly different. First of all, being bound by its responsibility for the Church, they were not only unable to support the armed underground openly, but also even to maintain any contact with it, because that would have given the Soviet authorities grounds to undertake even stronger repressions against the Church. Secondly, since the Church had never encouraged armed solutions to any conflict, it could not give its approval to the armed struggle. Thirdly, some bishops were not sure of the prospects for resistance, had a more realistic view of the international situation and did not want to encourage an even stronger resistance and, simultaneously, even more numerous victims. Archbishop Mečislovas Reinys, who for some time before the war had been the minister of foreign affairs and had a good understanding of international affairs, described the international situation in the spring of 1946: "Some people, desiring political changes in our country, expect

a forthcoming outbreak of a new war. I find these people very naive."[4] On the other hand, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church did not become a tool used by the Soviet authorities for the suppression of the resistance. From mid-1945, the bishops were ordered to condemn the armed resistance and to encourage the partisans to take advantage of the amnesty declared by the authorities. At first, almost all the Church hierarchy refused to carry out the Soviet demands. The central reason was that the armed resistance was based on political ideas, therefore the Church, adhering to its principle of non-interference in politics, could not criticise it, it could only warn of the obligations of religious ethics (these warnings were to be applied to the opposing side as well). Another attitude voiced by the bishops was their mistrust in the promises of the Soviet regime not to punish the partisans who had handed in their weapons.

Besides, the Church itself was not, and could not, be loyal to the atheist regime which aimed to destroy it. That the Catholic Church was ready to coexist with the Soviet regime if the latter guaranteed at least a minimum of freedom, is apparent from the statements of the senior clergy. On 7 October 1940, Father Mykolas Krupavičius confirmed this view in a memorandum to the Soviet authorities. A similar position was voiced by Bishop Teofilis Matulionis in a memorandum in June 1945,[5] and by Archbishop Reinys in a meeting with the Soviet authorities which took place in December 1946.[6] It should be noted that, in the statements of the latter two, the principle of the Church's non-involvement in politics, i.e. that under certain circumstances its loyalty did not mean support for the Soviet regime, was clearly pointed out. By adhering to this position, the bishops hoped to avoid collaboration with the authorities and, simultaneously, to protect the Church against reprisals. However, this position taken by the episcopate did not satisfy the authorities, which saw the loyalty of the Church only as a support to its policies. Therefore, despite the statements by the bishops, the authorities did not relax their repressive policy towards the Church and aimed at removing from its hierarchy people who did not agree with its understanding of loyalty.

In June 1945 the authorities managed to break down the head of the Kaunas archdiocese, Prelate Stanislovas Jokūbauskis, who consented to sign an appeal to the priests and believers of his diocese, approved by the Soviet authorities, calling for an end to the armed resistance. In order to persuade him, the MGB resorted, apart from blackmail, to the authority of the famous figure from the

pre-war period of independence, the signatory to the Act of Independence of 16 February, Father Vladas Mironas: in February 1945 he was recruited and used to exert influence on the Church hierarchy.[7] Meanwhile, the heads of other archdioceses either kept silent or, without revealing their political stance, spoke of the necessity of love for one's neighbour, quoted God's commandment "Thou shalt not kill," and raised other moral issues (the pastoral address of Archbishop Reinys of 9 August 1945, the Christmas pastoral letter by Bishop Kazimieras Paltarokas). Similar to these was the draft of the joint pastoral letter from all Lithuanian bishops, prepared after the meeting of the Church hierarchy with senior Soviet officials (Commissar Dmitrij Yefimov of the NKGB of the Lithuanian SSR, the chairman of the Committee for the Affairs of Religious Cults, I. Polianski, and his representative in Lithuania, Alfonsas Gailevičius, the vice-chairman of the Council of Commissars of Lithuania, Motiejus Šumauskas) and presented on 21 February 1946.[8] The authorities did not approve of this project, because the armed resistance was not condemned strongly enough, and some passages were clearly anti-Soviet. The bishops' firm stand, based on the teachings of the Church, under the circumstances of the Stalinist terror can be seen as a significant act of resistance on the part of the Church.

On the other hand, the episcopate tried to prevent the priests from using the Church for open anti-Soviet propaganda and tried to persuade them to avoid contacts with the anti-Soviet underground, as that would provide the authorities with an excuse to accuse the Church of disloyalty and would start unrestrained reprisals against it. As a supplement to the above-mentioned pastoral letter of the bishops, there were plans to distribute circulars to priests, in which they were instructed to serve God and to take care of the salvation of souls, to avoid politics and abstain from keeping objects inappropriate to God's home (i.e. weapons or ammunition for the resistance) in churches and presbyteries. The most important thing was that priests were encouraged to persuade the partisans, through parents and relatives, to return to constructive activities.[9] The bishops were wise enough not to publicise this document, since, according to them, a circular had to be distributed only in conjunction with a pastoral letter. And yet, many bishops (Bishop Paltarokas on 21 January 1946, Archbishop Reinys on 12 March and Prelate Jokūbauskis on 10 September) produced similar circulars to priests, but without urging them to influence the partisans' families.

The last attempt to change the stance of the bishops and to make them tools of the authorities was made by Major Okhrimenka, the head of the 4th Section of the "O" Department of the MGB of the USSR, which oversaw the Catholic Church over the whole of the USSR. In confidential talks with Bishop Paltarokas, Bishop Pranciškus Ramanauskas and Archbishop Reinys, he tried to persuade them to collaborate with the authorities. The bishops "were made to understand clearly that as long as the episcopate and the clergy do not change their hostile position [i.e. not becoming a tool of the authorities – A.S.], the Soviet power will consider the Church its secret and obvious enemy".[10]

All bishops gave a different response. Bishop Ramanauskas firmly rejected the proposed collaboration on the grounds that the Church could not support a regime which persecuted religion.[11] Bishop Paltarokas, determining his response by the desire to save the Church from destruction, agreed to carry out the following demands of the authorities:

"a) to use his position as head of the diocese in directing the clergy towards loyalty to the Soviet power and to instruct ordinary believers in the same spirit;

b) to forbid the clergy categorically to use the pulpit for anti-Soviet propaganda, as well as to discourage young people from joining the Komsomol and Young Pioneer organisations;

c) to take firm measures to prevent priests from participating in partisan formations or supporting them in any way, and to explain to religious partisans the harm that the partisan actions inflict on the nation and the Church."[12]

Archbishop Reinys, who at first seemingly agreed to implement similar demands by the authorities, refused in a further meeting with MGB officials, on the grounds that "apart from anything else, it means the most direct interference by the state in the affairs of the Church".[13] The change in the archbishop's position was to a large extent caused by the arrests of Bishop Teofilis Matulionis and Bishop Ramanauskas on 16 December 1946: he then saw that collaboration with the authorities did not protect the Church from persecution.

As a result of these talks, the arrest of the bishops and the death of Prelate Jokūbauskis on 3 February 1947, the majority of the Church hierarchy tended towards closer collaboration with the Soviet authorities. This was initiated and put into practice by the new head of the Kaunas archdiocese, Canon Juozas Stankevičius, supported by Bishop Paltarokas. On the night Canon

Stankevičius was elected (5 February 1947) with Archbishop Reinys and Prelate Bernardas Sužiedėlis (the administrator of the Kaišiadorys diocese after the arrest of Bishop Matulionis) present, the latter said: "If the clergy adheres to a reactionary [i.e. not pro-Soviet – A.S.] course, we will all be crushed. A way must be found to maintain contact with the authorities and achieve a modus vivendi with them."[14] Subsequently, too, these two bishops tried to find points in common with the Soviet authorities. After the arrest of Archbishop Reinys, Bishop Paltarokas the same day spoke with Canon Stankevičius and entirely supported his thoughts, which can be thus generalized: 1) if the Church did not collaborate with the authorities, it would be completely cut off from the public; 2) it was necessary to abandon illusions about the possibility of foreign interference, and therefore active resistance did not make sense; 3) the preservation of religion was the central task, while the contacts of priests with the partisans hindered it.[15]

At a meeting of diocese heads on 10 July 1947, Canon Stankevičius presented his programme for the struggle against "bandits". According to this programme, his address to priests was to be accompanied by sermons dealing with this topic, prepared by the diocese, and delivered to all churches of the diocese. He also planned to meet with priests to explain to them that his plans would be beneficial to the Church. Canon Stankevičius understood perfectly well that the Church would influence the partisan movement only if the majority of ordinary priests were ready to carry out the ideas set forth in the bishops' statements. His proposals found support among the heads of other dioceses, except for Canon Vincentas Vizgirda, who became the head of the Vilkaviškis diocese after the death of Bishop Antanas Karosas. Having read a draft of Canon Stankevičius' address, he said: "No Bolshevik could have written something better, and it is a shame that priests write such appeals. What are the Bolsheviks doing in Lithuania? Are they the legitimate power? They are invaders, usurpers and nothing else. They are going in one direction, the Church in another. Is the Church not to be separate from the state? What do they want from the Church?"[16] Meanwhile, the head of the Telšiai diocese, Canon Justinas Juodaitis, expressed in a concise form the standpoint of the others: "That is what is to be done now, otherwise we will all perish."[17] Although all diocese heads gave speeches which, to a greater or lesser extent, conformed with the demands of the Soviet authorities concerning the parti-

san issue in the summer of 1947, it was only Canon Stankevičius who resolutely struggled on against the armed underground. In his memoirs, which he wrote after the conflict with the Soviet authorities, he again spoke disparagingly of the partisan movement and called it the work of bandits.[18] This is confirmed by his active cooperation with the MGB in their struggle against the underground. Canon Stankevičius' tragedy was his belief that religion could find its place in the Soviet system if only the Church were entirely loyal and supported its policies. He did not realise until the mid-1960s that this was just an illusion.

Thus, from the middle of 1947 there remained only one diocese of the Lithuanian Catholic Church which had not openly dissociated itself from the partisan movement – the Vilkaviškis diocese. On the basis of Soviet records alone, it is hard to tell whether its contacts with the armed underground were close. In May 1949 the security machine of the Lithuanian SSR completed, under an order from Moscow, its investigation of the "Tina" case, arresting the head of the Vilkaviškis diocese, Canon Vizgirda, the chancellor, Father Stasys Mikelkevičius, and five other priests. Evidence obtained by eavesdropping, according to which Canon Vizgirda had instructed the priests to protect the heads of the partisan movement and, talking to an unidentified member of the underground, had advised him on further ways of fighting and given him moral support, was the basis for these arrests.[19] In an appeal written in 1955, the sentenced priest, Father Mikelkevičius, asserted that the evidence had been forged in order to dissolve the independent diocese of Vilkaviškis, because the practice of eavesdropping was well known and these conversations could not have taken place.[20] In any case, Canon Vizgirda's firm refusal to communicate with the Soviet authorities in the liquidation of the partisan movement created favourable opportunities for the priests of this diocese to support the partisan underground most actively and for the longest period of time. On the other hand, the partisan movement itself was also the most active in the Vilkaviškis diocese.

It is possible to say that, although the Soviet authorities had managed to achieve an officially negative line by the episcopate of Lithuania towards the partisan movement by mid-1949, it did not exert a significant influence on its suppression. Ordinary clergymen, who enjoyed more freedom than the hierarchy, neutralized the negative attitude from above. Daily sermons and

other activities by the priests would drown out the appeals from the diocese. In spite of the demands of the Soviet authorities, sanctions by the Church were not applied to priests charged with having contacts with the partisans, on the basis of the formal principle that the Church itself was to check secular charges. Besides, ordinary people and the partisans regarded the statements by the episcopate with caution, because they were aware that most were the outcome of the pressure the authorities put upon the Church. This is confirmed by the partisans', the majority of whom were religious, hostile reaction to these statements. In response to Prelate Jokūbauskis' address of June 1945, the partisans disseminated proclamations urging people not to believe him, while Canon Stankevičius was more than once threatened physically. Seeing that the voice of the hierarchy of the Church did not reach the partisans, from 1948 the Soviet authorities stopped forcing diocese heads to participate in the suppression of the partisan movement. On the other hand, the partisans themselves, realising that their contacts with them threatened the survival of the Church, did not demand assistance and religious services from legally functioning priests.

By its very existence and teaching, the Church could encourage resistance to the totalitarian system. Besides, as the whole of the country could not take to the woods, the priests did not have the moral right to provide a pretext to destroy the legal structure of the Church by their active support of the partisan movement. The scope of the resistance was determined not only by the stand of the clergy, but also by the anti-religious actions carried out by the Soviet authorities: the arrests of priests and their humiliation in the everyday activities of Soviet officials and in the media, the closure and desecration of churches and the destruction of crosses. Because of this, the defence of the faith in Lithuanian society, which had a high level of religious observance, naturally became one of the most important elements of the resistance.

II. THE RESISTANCE OF THE CHURCH TO THE ATTEMPTS TO IMPOSE ON IT A SOVIET ORGANISATIONAL MODEL

When the attempts to turn the Church into a tool for the suppression of armed resistance became clear, and with the Soviet regime taking firmer root in Lithuania, direct pressure on the Church with the aim of weakening it was stepped up. One of the main measures was the attempt to destroy its structure

and to replace it by the "self-government" of religious communities, through which the Soviets could directly regulate the life of the Church. This order had to be implemented after the enforcement of the so-called "registration of houses of prayer and the servants of cult" (further called registration). On 16 February 1945, the Religinių kultų reikalų taryba prie SSSR LKT (RKRT, Council of the Affairs of Religious Cults at the Council of Commissars of the USSR) authorised its officer in Lithuania, Alfonsas Gailevičius, to start the registration of churches and priests. However, the bishops demanded to be informed about the law on which the registration was based, or about a written decree from the authorities regarding registration in Lithuania. In this way, they showed their resolution not to carry out the requirements of the authorities destroying the traditional order of the Church. Since the situation was complicated, this position taken by the episcopate forced the Soviet authorities to delay the registration.

A new stage in the implementation of the registration began early in 1947. On 20 January, the RKRT forwarded a directive to its officer in which he was instructed to undertake firm action in implementing the registration. If the negative approach of the episcopate and the ordinary priests could not be broken down, it was recommended to encourage believers to register religious communities independently, after closing several churches. In the directive, the registration was defined as a matter of extreme political importance, the aim of which was to break down the leading role of the clergy in the Church.[22] The security services were to assist in carrying out this task: on 14 March, the MGB of the Lithuanian SSR instructed its regional branches to "actively" participate in the process of registration and to assure a firm stand by the agency in the church committees.[23] The head of the RKRT department, the Bolshevik K. Pugo, Latvian by origin, was sent to assist the authorities. However, this time too the deputy minister of security, Leonardas Martavičius, had to admit that "due to sabotage by the episcopate, the registration of churches and priests was ruined."[24] Even the arrest of Archbishop Reinys, who was the most firm opponent of registration, did not help. Responding to the criticism by the RKRT officer, Gailevičius, to the effect that, by opposing registration, the hierarchy of the Church ignored Soviet law, Martavičius expressed his doubts about the legitimacy of these laws. According to Reinys, they did not conform to the international obligations

of the USSR to respect the freedom of religions.[25] Following the arrest of the archbishop in June 1947, Bishop Paltarokas of Panevėžys, the only one left in Lithuania, became the unofficial head of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. He played the main role in determining the stand of the Church regarding the issue of registration.

On 26 February 1948, a meeting of the dioceses took place in Panevėžys. The meeting was not approved by the Soviet authorities. A decision was made to oppose registration as long as possible, and, if it became impossible to avoid, to aim at the lowest possible impact of it on the Church. Thus, the meeting revealed a certain turn in the stand taken by the Church hierarchy: up till then, registration had been rejected unequivocally; now it was clear that, under strong pressure from the authorities, it would give in. After this meeting, the central point of conflict was no longer the fact of registration, but its contents and outcome. The change was clear also in the proposal by Bishop Paltarokas to the new RKRT officer, Bronius Pušinis, to allow the Church to prepare the draft of the registration statute and to base further talks on it. In the plan prepared by Canon Stankevičius, the order of the formation and the function of church committees in essence corresponded to the activities of the existing parish committees. It also agreed that they would be registered by the secular authorities. The plan made a very important point, that "the registration of churches is related to the administration, and not to the management of churches and their property".[26] However, observing the tendency of the Church hierarchy to compromise and having found out the conclusions of the meeting of 26 February 1948 from the MGB, the Soviet authorities paid no attention to the proposal and took drastic measures to break down the resistance of the Church hierarchy. Under the initiative of the LSSR MGB, on 9 July 1948 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania passed a decree on the nationalisation of houses of prayer and other church property. The decree was the basis for closing churches, first of all in Vilnius, and for depriving priests who refused to register their residences. This broke the will of some Church leaders and late in July canons Stankevičius and Juodaitis issued a directive to the priests in their dioceses to register. The longest and most obstinate disobedience of the demands of the authorities came from the dioceses of Kaišiadorys and Vilkaviškis, but when the united front of resistance was broken, even they had to surrender. The leaders of

these dioceses, who stubbornly resisted both registration and the attempts to use the Church for the suppression of the armed resistance, were arrested in the first half of 1949. It should be admitted, however, that the Soviet authorities did not manage to achieve all their aims through registration. The most active parishioners became members of the church committees ("twenties"), while the chairmen of their executive bodies almost without exception were deans, and this is why they did not become tools for the interference of the Soviet authorities into the life of the parishes. On the contrary, they even contributed to the modernisation of the Church and encouraged the laity to take a more active part in the life of the Church. This shortcoming of the registration was pointed out by the above-mentioned deputy minister for security of the Lithuanian SSR, Martavičius.[27] However, the registration brought another evil – the RKRT officer won the opportunity to interfere in the appointment of priests to parishes, because he had to issue registration certificates with the priests' actual place of service indicated on them.

III. THE "NATIONAL CHURCH": COLLAPSE OF THE PLAN

The Soviet regime tried another means for weakening the Church – to create a so-called "national church" which would officially dissociate itself from the Holy See. The organisation of the national church and the division of the clergy, as well as the protection of Evangelical Reformers were the main measures taken to weaken Catholicism, which the RKRT officer, Gailevičius, explained to Polianski, the chairman of the RKRT, in June 1945.[28] The attempts by the authorities to find enough influential clergymen in 1945 and 1946 to declare the establishment of an alternative church were unsuccessful. Therefore, in 1947 this plan was postponed, because the authorities realised that the artificially founded movement for a national church would be a marginal and isolated phenomenon. This is confirmed by the attempts of the MGB to allow Canon Stankevičius, who was well disposed to Soviet power, to make illegal contact with the Holy See and to be conferred Bishop and Primate of the Catholic Church in Lithuania.[29] At the same time, the head of the Catholic Church of Latvia, Archbishop Springovičius, was allowed to contact the Holy See and receive its approval for appointing two priests loyal to the Soviets as bishops. The vice-chairman of the RKRT, J. Sadovskis, explained this action:

"Taking into account that these measures [i.e. the establishment of the 'national church' – A.S.] will not soon yield results, and the situation demands swift, if only partial, improvement, the council is at the same time forced to seek agreement with the heads of the Catholic Church who are loyal to Soviet power."[30]

The attempts to divide the clergy did not cease, and direct interference by the RKRT officer into the relations between diocese administrations and ordinary priests was used for that purpose. In spite of all the promises by the authorities, very few priests became reliable tools for Soviet anti-clerical policy. This was shown by the collapse of the initiatives of the RKRT officer in the autumn of 1949.

On 1 July 1949, Pope Pius XII issued a decree by which those who joined the Communist Party voluntarily were forbidden to administer the sacraments. This provoked a hysteria of Soviet propaganda. It branded the Vatican as an enemy of the communist bloc and a warmonger. On his own initiative, Pušinis prepared a protest against this decree, condemning the Pope, and started collecting signatures. The dioceses refused to sign the letter, motivated by their obedience to the Holy Father, and advised priests not to sign it either, but Pušinis tried to exert direct pressure on priests through local authorities, recommending them "to deprive the most reactionary priests who refuse to sign of their registration certificates".[31] By means of promises, blackmail and deceit the signatures of 102 priests were collected (at the time there were 919 registered priests in the country[32]), but it turned out later that only 20 priests had signed the paper of their own free will.[33] The authorities did not approve of another of Pušinis' initiatives: to form an organising committee of progressive (i.e. pro-Soviet) priests to convene a congress with 100 priests (probably those who had signed the letter).[34] The main reason for the disapproval was the information from the security services concerning the very poor prospects for such a movement. Therefore, the idea to establish a national church in Lithuania was finally rejected at a meeting of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the LCP on 25 November 1949.[35]

The Church did not in fact have any legal contacts with the Vatican. Trying to break this blockade, the clergy searched for illegal ways to communicate with the Holy See. We have already mentioned the letter from Lithuanian Catholics to Pope Pius XII, prepared by Father Stankūnas; in late 1947 it was taken to the West by partisan envoys, who managed to break through the Iron

Curtain. Even earlier, Father Pranciškus Račiūnas succeeded in getting in touch with Antonius Laberge, also illegally, through the rector of the only Catholic church in Moscow. (St Ludwig's Church was formally intended to provide services to the staff of foreign embassies. The Soviet authorities called it a French church and did not recognise the rights of apostolic administrators to be its rectors, although this was the position declared by both Laberge, who arrived in Moscow early in 1946, and his predecessor Father L. Brown.) Račiūnas met Laberge in Moscow in March 1947, informed him of the state of the Church in Lithuania and agreed to maintain further contacts through intermediaries. The hierarchy of the Church was aware of Račiūnas' contacts, therefore it is already possible to speak of an attempt to break through the Iron Curtain (the first was a more personal initiative). Unfortunately, this contact broke in early 1949, when, accused of spying for the Vatican and other foreign countries, Laberge was expelled from Moscow, and Račiūnas was arrested in June 1949. As a Vatican "spy" he was sentenced to 25 years' hard labour in Siberia. One more illegal channel of communication existed through the contacts of Polish priests of the Vilnius archbishopric with their confreres in Poland, mainly with the former archbishop of Vilnius, Romualdas Jalbrzykowski, residing in Bialystok.[36] Besides, monastic orders in Lithuania also kept up correspondence with their centres abroad, but frequently the MGB succeeded in intercepting their correspondence and it caused more harm than good.

IV. CONFLICT OVER THE OPPORTUNITIES TO SPREAD THE WORD OF GOD AND THE LIMITS OF PASTORAL SPACE

The most painful blow to the Church and the longest-lasting conflict was the imposition of atheism and the restriction of pastoral opportunities for the Church imposed by the Soviet authorities. From the very first days of the second occupation, the Church hierarchy began to demand the promised freedom of conscience: on 30 August 1944, Archbishop Reinys addressed the people's commissar for education of the Lithuanian SSR with a request to allow the teaching of religion in schools. This demand was repeated by those at the illegal meeting of bishops and representatives of dioceses which was held in Ukmergė on 5 September 1944. They also suggested the re-institution of chaplains in Lithuanian regiments of the Red Army. The Soviet authorities not only barred the Church from schools, but also banned the teaching of religion and group

catechisation in churches. In the early post-war years this ban was entirely ignored and religious instruction was in many places simply transferred from schools to churches, and timetables were frequently put up on the doors of the churches. Although at the start of the re-occupation the Soviet authorities did not pay much attention to this, it did not mean that the teaching of religion was tolerated. Bishop Matulionis' circulars to priests concerning the organisation of religious education of young people in 1945 and 1946 were treated in MGB reports as proof of anti-Soviet activities, while the main task of the RKRT officer in Lithuania was to stamp out the teaching of religion and catechisation. In November 1946, a directive from the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the LSSR was forwarded to regional executive committees, which demanded the immediate abolition of the teaching of religion in churches.[37]

Bishop Matulionis took care of secondary schools as well. On 7 April 1945 he wrote an address to the commissar for education of the LSSR, which provoked intense irritation among the Soviet authorities. He protested against the coercive inclusion of schoolchildren in the atheist Pioneer and Komsomol organisations. He did not prevent priests in his diocese expressing the negative attitude of the Church towards these organisations in churches. Bearing in mind the influence of the Church on the public, it is not hard to imagine the impact of such statements on these organisations. As a result, the chancellor of the Kaišiadorys diocese, Stanislovas Kiškis, who was the first to announce this in public in the town's cathedral, was one of the first victims of the Soviets among priests.

Although in 1948 the Central Committee of the LCP passed a special decree on the struggle against the reactionary (i.e. non-conformist) Catholic clergy, one of the points of which demanded firm measures in putting an end to the organised teaching of religion and catechisation, and Bishop Paltarokas was warned by senior security officials of the consequences,[38] instruction was secretly continued. In one of his reports, written in the middle of 1950, the RKRT officer indicated 11 locations where priests "work" with groups of young people.[39] The attempts by the MGB to frighten the more active priests did not yield any results either. Father Antanas Šeškevičius SJ was arrested in June 1949. He was charged with founding a "clerical-nationalist" youth organisation, the Guard of Honour of the Heart of Jesus, when he worked in St Ignatius' Church in Šiauliai between 1944 and 1948. According to the MGB,

this organisation aimed at "diverting young people from Communist education, preventing them from joining the Komsomol organisation, educating them in an anti-Soviet nationalist spirit".[40] During interrogation Šeškevičius asserted that the organisation was just a religious fraternity which did not have any other aims except for fostering a deeper knowledge of God and His glorification, while the meeting of young people at his house were conferences of a religious nature for teaching religion to young people.[41] (In autumn 1944 he declared the view of the Church towards the Pioneer and Komsomol organisations.) In spite of this, Šeškevičius was sentenced to 25 years of penal servitude, while five other participants of these gatherings received lesser punishments. The severity of the Soviet authorities towards Šeškevičius was probably prompted by the fact that when he moved from Šiauliai to the small town of Ryliškiai in the Alytus region, he very quickly managed to rally religious fraternities and a temperance society.

As a form of resistance to the imposition of atheism, underground youth organisations of a religious nature appeared, with priests taking an active part in their activities. First of all, attempts were made to preserve the remains of the *ateitininkai* structure and continue its work. Father Marijonas Petkevičius, who as early as 1944 fell foul of the Soviet authorities and had to live illegally, and Father Račiūnas contributed much to this. (In autumn 1944 he declared the view of the Church towards the Pioneer and Komsomol organisations.) It was mostly due to their efforts that ateitininkai groups of students and gymnasium pupils were established in Kaunas, Panevėžys and other towns between 1945 and 1948.[42] One of the most interesting religious youth organisations which existed in the post-war years emerged from the underground ateitininkai groups.

When in 1948 the students of the Humanities Faculty of Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas were transferred to Vilnius, the activities of the ateitininkai of this faculty moved too. Algis Kavaliauskas, an active figure among the post-war ateitininkai, became the spirit of this movement; Kazimieras Vaičionis, the dean of the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, was its spiritual father. On 31 October 1948 the most active members of the movement drew up the act of foundation of the Gates of Dawn (Aušros vartų) College, where the idea to found an underground Catholic university with five faculties – theology and philosophy, the humanities, law, engineer-

ing, medicine and natural sciences – was floated. Although the act[43] proposed ambitious plans, in reality the college did not and could not become an alternative educational institution: it contented itself with religious education, joint discussions of theological and philosophical works and recollections. However, taking into account the fact that the students of the Pedagogical Institute – future teachers – were the majority in this movement, its significance becomes obvious. Quite a large library of religious literature was built up and kept in a small storeroom at the professors' reading hall in Vilnius University Library. It was looked after by a former seminarian, a student at Vilnius Pedagogical Institute, L. Guobužas.[44] In autumn 1949, a group of active students, which had until then operated in the Kaunas seminary and was headed by Povilas Vaičekauskas, joined this organisation (scared by persecution by the Soviet authorities, they had left the seminary in the spring). From the summer of the same year, the Soviet security apparatus knew about the activities of Kavaliauskas and his supporters. The outcome of its actions was the arrest of 22 people related to the organisation (three priests among them) in late 1949 and early 1950.[45] The significance of the role of this organisation in the struggle against the imposition of atheism is confirmed by the fact that in later Soviet documents it was referred to as the most important instance of the destructive activities of priests among young people, while its liquidation was considered one of the biggest victories of the MGB.[46]

One of the central measures in the anti-clerical policy of the Soviet authorities was the thinning of the ranks of the clergy, primarily by obstructing the training of new priests. When the Soviets re-occupied Lithuania, a permit was issued only for the Kaunas seminary (there were three before the war). The episcopate tried to oppose it, and made special efforts to get the Vilnius seminary back. Canon Edmundas Balsys, the chancellor of the Vilnius archbishopric, made appeals to the national aspirations of the LSSR authorities and people in the Vilnius region,[47] while Archbishop Reinys right until his arrest demanded that the seminary in Vilnius be opened, on the grounds of the guarantee of freedom of religion declared in the Soviet constitution. Despite all that, the possibilities for training priests were further restricted: following the demand by the Soviet authorities in the 1946–1947 academic year that the number of clerics at the Kaunas seminary be reduced from 320 to 150, the seminary was deprived of part of its premises. However, according to MGB records, the

members of monastic orders expelled from the seminary (they made up the majority of the expelled) continued to study with priests of their orders, hoping to be ordained illegally, while the Capuchin friars travelled to Archbishop Springovičius of Riga to be ordained.[48] The illegal seminary which operated in Lithuania in the 1970s and 1980s followed the same principle.

One of the main reasons for restricting the Kaunas seminary was the fact that during the first post-war years a number of its students maintained contacts with the underground and the seminary sheltered people hiding from Soviet persecution. Contacts with the underground and hiding illegal people was one of the main reasons for the restriction of monasteries, and later for their complete dissolution. "Reactionary" elements were purged from the seminary up until Stalin's death: 25 students were deported during the mass deportations of the people of the Baltic countries, called Vesna (Spring) and Priboy (Tidal Wave),[49] while in the autumn of 1949 the number of seminarians was yet again reduced to half its previous size. The year 1950 marked the beginning of arrests of professors who taught the students to be firm supporters of the Church and who were brave enough to criticize the anti-clerical policy of the Soviet regime. From 1950 to 1953, among the persecuted, were the rector of the seminary, Augustinas Vaitiekaitis (who had been in this position since 1947), the professors Juozas Grubliauskas, A. Kruša, and others. The last victim of the Stalinist terror in the seminary was the famous Catholic philosopher of the inter-war years, the organiser of the ateitininkai, Prelate Pranas Kuraitis. Arrested on 20 February 1953, three months later he was sentenced to 25 years of penal servitude.

With the Soviet authorities restricting the priests' pastoral activities, the issue of the religious press became especially urgent. According to the then head of the Telšiai diocese, Canon Juodaitis, when the collective catechisation of children and teaching of religion were abolished, the clergy formed the slogan: "A catechism to every family".[50] However, from 1946 the Soviet authorities forbade the publishing of any (even liturgical) religious publications. This produced a search for illegal ways of producing religious (especially catechismal) literature. In Šviesa, the state publishing house, an edition of about 10,000 copies of a pre-war catechism and a hymnal, prepared by Bishop Paltarokas, was printed illegally in 1948. The greater part of the edition was distributed to believers.[51] The organisers of this venture were the seminary

Professor Grubliauskas and Sister Emilija Burokaitė (arrested late in 1949 in connection with the trial of Father Račiūnas). Religious literature was further printed and disseminated illegally. Three men loading illegally printed prayer books on to a lorry were detained in Plungė on 15 January 1952 (3,000 copies were confiscated).[52] We can assert then that the end of the 1940s was the beginning of Catholic underground publishing: in the spring of 1949 the attention of the Soviet authorities was attracted by a small book, distributed in Vilnius and printed underground.[53]

V. THE ATTITUDE OF THE HIERARCHY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITHUANIA TOWARDS THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES BETWEEN 1948 AND 1952

As has already been mentioned, a policy of closer cooperation with the Soviet regime was formed by the Church hierarchy in early 1947. It was promoted by Canon Stankevičius and Bishop Paltarokas. Simultaneously, instead of the prevailing defensive standpoint, a standpoint of coexistence started taking root. The former was based on the premise that the position of the Church could be defended without compromise with the Soviet authorities, and by disobeying its demands. The formation of this position was to a large extent influenced by the belief that the political situation was a temporary one, and by the personalities of the priests who could not imagine themselves as instruments of the Soviet authorities. The memorandum by Bishop Matulionis of June 1945 could be considered the most revealing manifestation of this position. Its "motto" was: "The Catholic Church coexists with different forms of administration only if the execution of its entrusted mission to humanity is not hindered; however, it will never agree to be a tool of a secular power."[54]

When the last of the "disobedient" bishops – Archbishop Reinys – was arrested in the middle of 1947, and when it became evident that the Soviet regime was to remain in Lithuania for some time, the position of the Church started changing. The view that, in order to survive, the Church had to yield to certain demands by the authorities was gathering strength; on the other hand, these demands should not be too distant from the main dogmas and canons of the Church. Along with the above-mentioned clerics, this position was approved by Canon Juodaitis. In adhering to it, these priests wrote ad-

dresses where they spoke against the armed resistance. They also urged believers and priests to participate in the elections organised by the Soviets, and, after a long resistance, reconciled themselves to registration. However, they refused to sign the protest against the Vatican, edited by Pušinis, and succeeded in avoiding a possibly more painful impact of registration on the structure and existence of the Church. Canon Vizgirda and Prelate Sužiedėlis, who tried to follow in the footsteps of the persecuted bishops, were eventually arrested and sentenced in 1949. The administration of the dioceses of Vilkaviškis and Kaišiadorys was handed over to Canon Stankevičius. When in the summer of 1949 the Soviets forced Canon Basys to leave his post at the Vilnius archbishopric and Bishop Paltarokas was invited to manage it, the Church hierarchy consisted exclusively of advocates of coexistence.

The year 1949 was the time of the hardest trials for the position chosen by the Church hierarchy. The persecution of priests grew: 91 priests were arrested that year;[55] the number of atheist publications in the press was twice as high as in 1948 or 1950;[56] churches were closed one after another, or left without priests; the monasteries were closed, and there were cases where priests were simply not allowed to carry out their duties. However, the following year the pressure by the authorities subsided, because they realised that the Church consisted not only of bishops, priests and monks, but also of ordinary believers whose unhappiness with the strict measures of the anti-clerical policy made the consolidation of Soviet power in Lithuania more difficult. Besides, with tension growing in international relations, it became urgent to involve all religious confessions in the Soviet Union in the so-called movement of peace supporters (or supporters of USSR politics, because only its politics could be peaceful).

Prerequisites for the softening of the attitude of the Soviets to the Church were created by the disposition of the Church hierarchy towards cooperation. In the autumn of 1950 the RKRT officer, Pušinis, wrote to the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Šiauliai region: "Due to the present international situation it is not possible to exert firm pressure on the Catholic Church, in order not to raise the discontent among believers here and elsewhere."[57] Having sensed the softening of the anti-clerical policy, the behaviour of the Church hierarchy became more courageous. The visit by Canon Stankevičius to Polianski, the chairman of the RKRT, in Moscow in late 1949 was espe-

cially important (he went there on his way from Sochi, where, with the help of the MGB, he had gone for medical treatment). During that meeting he found out that it was prohibited to close churches and wilfully deprive priests of their registration certificates, and that the RKRT had no right to interfere in the appointment of priests to parishes.[58] What Canon Stankevičius did not know was that Pušinis had been instructed in advance to soften pressure on the Church. He thought that Pušinis was distorting the real policy of the Soviet regime; this gave him and Bishop Paltarokas the courage to defend other interests of the Church. Therefore, in the spring of 1950 Pušinis complained to his superiors in Moscow, that "our partial refusal of offensive actions was seen by the reactionary part of the Catholic clergy as our weakness, and they declared war".[59]

However, the coexistence principle adopted by the clergy did not change. This was confirmed by their participation in various conferences of supporters of peace, and their speeches on radio programmes for foreign countries. This is how Canon Stankevičius justified his forthcoming participation in the Second All-Union Conference of Peace Supporters in Moscow on 16–18 November 1950: "With the international situation very tense, to live in the Soviet Union and to be the enemy of this Union is a dangerous matter. The situation must be softened somehow. Thus I am going to Moscow in the hope that this trip, just like my trip last year, will at least to some extent be beneficial to the Catholics of Lithuania."[60]

It must be admitted that certain conflicts arose. Bishop Paltarokas, trying to rely exclusively upon the essential principles of Christian teaching, in his first speech on the radio refused to name the British and the Americans as warmongers. In his view, it would have been impermissible interference by the Church in politics: "He says he is against all instigators of war, be it the Chinese who invaded Tibet, or the North Koreans who started attacks against South Korea."[61] The bishop's position cooled somewhat the intentions of the Soviet authorities to use him in propaganda campaigns. At the same time, it provoked a disagreement between Bishop Paltarokas and Canon Stankevičius, who was more tolerant of the demands of the Soviets. Their opinions were also in conflict over the issue whether believers should be instructed in the doctrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, announced by the Holy See in 1950 (the Soviet authorities disapproved of it).

The bishop realised that the compliance of the Church did not reduce the anti-clerical attitude of the Soviets, therefore he started having doubts whether further cooperation with the authorities was any use. The changed position of Bishop Paltarokas forced the Soviet authorities to look for a more compliant successor. In 1951, Pušinis suggested that Bishop Paltarokas should contact the Vatican concerning the ordination of new bishops for Lithuania, and referred to Canon Petras Maželis as a suitable candidate (after the arrest of Canon Juodaitis, late in 1949, he became the head of the Telšiai diocese).[62] However, remembering the imprisoned bishops, Paltarokas replied that there were enough bishops in the country. Because of his intractability, the fate of his confreres appeared to be coming his way: in 1953, the MGB of the LSSR twice suggested that Bishop Paltarokas be arrested and tried.[63] Only the political situation, which changed after Stalin's death, saved the 78-year-old bishop from the Siberian concentration camps.

After the forced collectivisation of farms, which some priests tried to oppose, risking their own situation, and that of the Church in general, the belief in the inevitability of coexistence with the Soviets became predominant not only among the church administration, but among ordinary priests as well. This is confirmed by the statement by Pušinis, to the effect that, although he did not believe in the sincerity of the loyalty of the Church, in 1952 the life of the Church was the most uneventful in the entire post-war period.[64]

VI. THE FIRST SIGNS OF CHALLENGING SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS RELIGION AND THE UNSUCCESSFUL SEARCH FOR A MODUS VIVENDI

Stalin's death, and the thaw in the political climate in the USSR immediately following it, brought about new tactics by the Soviets regarding the Catholic Church, which were timidly begun in the last years of the dictator's life. Their main purpose was to turn the Church into a tool of its foreign policy (like the Russian Orthodox Church or Islam). In order to achieve this, the pressure on the Church and the confrontations with it had to be stopped. The pressure had already weakened by 1950, and in the middle of the 1950s, with the regime becoming relatively more liberal, opinions emerged to the effect that relations with the Catholic Church in the Soviet Union, as well as with the Vatican, should be completely normalised, and that the Church should be won over by making allowances for it. For that purpose, conditions for pasto-

ral activities were liberalised, churches could be renovated and some new ones built without any obstacles, a minimum amount of religious literature could be published, etc.[65] What was the reaction of the Catholic Church to these changes in the anti-clerical policy of the Soviets?

The hopes of the Soviets that, having reduced the pressure on the Church and having made some allowances, the position of the advocates of coexistence would become stronger and that the Church would begin closer cooperation with the authorities, did not materialise. On the contrary, the new stand of the Church – the challenge to the anti-clerical policy of the Soviets – became increasingly evident. At the centre of this position were Bishop Matulionis and Bishop Ramanauskas, who had returned from prison, the large number of priests persecuted during the post-war years (in all, 238 priests returned to Lithuania in 1956 and 1957),[66] as well as Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius, who was ordained in 1955. Taking advantage of the slackening of the regime, they aimed at the broadest possible expansion of the rights of the Church, an increase in its work and, simultaneously, preventing it from becoming a political tool of the regime.

Early in 1956, a few months after the ordination of Bishop Steponavičius, Pušinis complained about his work and his intractability: he would not allow priests to participate in Soviet propaganda and refused to participate himself; he urged priests and parishioners to write complaints to Moscow; and had begun an appeal for the return of St Philip and St James' Church in Vilnius.[67]

Bishop Matulionis, who returned to Lithuania in May 1956, was even more active. Having rested and acquainted himself with the situation, at a meeting of the dioceses which was held in Vilnius on 6 September 1957 and was not approved by the authorities, he proposed the following stand by the Church under the new conditions: "At present the Church is free, therefore no attention should be paid to Rugienis' [the officer responsible for religions in Lithuania from 1 March 1957 – A.S.] demands or those of any other officials. It is very bad when priests and the Church administration make concessions to and assist the authorities."[68] The purpose of their meeting was to determine a united position towards the Soviet authorities and, through Canon Stankevičius, to try to defend the seminary against interference by the authorities; the latter, however, supported by Maželis who had been ordained a bishop, maintained a principle of coexistence between the Church and the authorities.

Meanwhile, Bishop Matulionis continued the struggle for the right of the Church to exercise freedom in its management. Disregarding the negative disposition of the Soviet authorities, he declared himself head of the Kaišiadorys diocese and ousted Canon Stankevičius from the post. In addition, through illegal channels, he managed to contact the Holy See, and received its approval for the candidates as auxiliary and successor that he had proposed. The response from the Vatican reached Lithuania on 17 December 1957. It also solved the issue of the successor to Bishop Paltarokas: Bishop Steponavičius was appointed apostolic administrator of the Panevėžys diocese. Thus the successful illegal contact by Bishop Matulionis with the Holy See ruined the plans of the Soviets to give Canon Stankevičius or Bishop Maželis charge of the diocese after Paltarokas' death, and in this way to implement its policy to concentrate the administration of the church in the hands of a clergyman loyal to the authorities. Bishop Matulionis, disregarding the will of the authorities, ordained Vincentas Sladkevičius a bishop in Birštonas on Christmas night in 1957. He sought to "legitimise" his position officially, i.e. to obtain a permit from the authorities to carry out his new duties. In his letter of 1958 to the Council of Ministers, like the members of the Catholic human rights movement of the 1970s, he based his words on the constitution of the USSR which, in his words "guaranteeing citizens freedom of conscience, respects not only their religious beliefs but also the forms which govern their religious life."[69] It shows that Bishop Matulionis sought recognition of the rights of the Church and not the foundation of an underground structure as resistance to the anti-clerical policy. The reaction of the authorities to the bishop's challenge was unequivocal: in the autumn of 1958 he, and later Bishop Sladkevičius, was exiled to remote Lithuanian towns. In 1961, the same fate befell Bishop Steponavičius. The latter event marked the end of the resistance of the Church to the Soviet regime through its official hierarchy. On the other hand, the activities of Bishop Matulionis and Bishop Steponavičius in the 1950s set an example and partly inspired the movement for the rights of the Church and believers, which started in the late 1960s. The most active participants in this movement were ordinary priests.

It is true that, in the 1950s, the above-mentioned bishops were not alone. First of all, they were supported by Bishop Paltarokas, for as long as he was

able to work. Thanks to him and his supporters, the attempts of the Soviet authorities to use an apparent gift to the Church – the publication of a magazine for priests – as a means "to direct the work of priests towards the struggle for peace",[70] collapsed in 1956. When Bishop Paltarokas found out about the true purposes of this magazine and recalled his representatives from the editorial board, the authorities feared a boycott of the magazine and did not allow Canon Stankevičius to publish it alone.

A new resistance network against the restrictions on the Church was emerging. It consisted of ordinary priests, monks active in the underground and laymen. Its formation was encouraged mostly by the need to find ways of publishing religious literature prohibited by the authorities. Attempts were made to fill this gap with collections of religious reflections and sermons, written by priests and copied and disseminated by monks. The flow of this literature increased noticeably after 1958. It is shown by the following example: during a search conducted in the flat of A. Česnulevičiūtė in Kaunas on 18 January 1958, 14 typewritten books of religious content and a multitude of manuscripts were found.[71] This search was made in connection with the case of Father Aleksandras Markevičius-Markaitis, who was arrested early in 1958. After his return from prison in 1956, in one and a half years, he had written three religious books: *Prisikėlimo varpai* (The Bells of Resurrection), *Jaunam kunigui į talką* (Helping a Young Priest), and a collection of sermons *A Sower Went Away* (he gave the latter to S. Ryliškytė to copy, and the KGB officers found 14 copies of the typewritten text in her flat).[72] For these activities Father Markevičius was sentenced to seven years in prison. Other clergymen persecuted during the wave of the arrests of priests in 1957 and 1958 were Father Antanas Jurgaitis, who had written a catechism for his parishioners, and Father Petras Rauda, who had written his reminiscences. Illegal religious literature reached Lithuania even from exile and places of imprisonment. Father Račiūnas, who was in prison between 1945 and 1965, was especially active in this sphere. The KGB interrogator, Andriushov, wrote in 1963 when he was reviewing Račiūnas' case: "It has also been determined that Račiūnas has for several years been writing ideologically damaging theological works and sending them through trusted persons released from the camps to freedom to his contacts in the LSSR, to be distributed among the believers. He wrote and forwarded to Lithuania six volumes, consisting of separate manu-

scripts ... An analysis of the most recent manuscript, entitled *Ko minia laukia iš Katalikų Bažnyčios* (What the Crowd is Expecting from the Catholic Church), consisting of 261 pages, shows that Račiūnas is attempting to lay theoretical foundations to the necessity of carrying out reforms in the Catholic Church, so that it avoids final ideological destruction."[73] For these activities Račiūnas was not released earlier, although the Commission of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR reduced his sentence on 24 August 1956. This is what the Soviets made of this "press": "Aiming at activating religious and anti-Soviet activities, some priests write sermons/essays where in a hidden form, hiding beneath theological phraseology and appealing to national feelings, they instigate nationalist passions, instil the idea that the present situation is temporary, encourage religious and anti-Soviet work. These sermons are typewritten and disseminated among priests, intellectuals and especially among the young."[74]

The activities of former Marian priests in Suvalkija caused great anxiety to the Soviet authorities: they organised the illegal publication of religious literature, group catechisation of children, and maintained contacts with the USA and the Vatican. From the end of 1952 they were persecuted (in Operation Vatikano šakalai [The Jackals of the Vatican] by the security apparatus). Although from the early 1950s the priests started avoiding contacts with underground organisations and any other political activities, the number of priests persecuted by the security apparatus did not drop. On the other hand, following the order of 20 July 1954 of the USSR KGB, a number of unimportant cases were abandoned. At the beginning of 1949, 201 suspects[76] related to the activities of religious confessions in Lithuania were included in MGB records; by the middle of 1957 there were 254 priests[77] (at the time there were 900 priests in Lithuania). In all, 3,832 people[78] were included in the records of the LSSR KGB, thus priests accounted for 6.5 per cent of all the persecuted.

The activation of resistance in the middle of the 1950s was noticed by the 3rd Department of the 4th Board of the LSSR KGB, which supervised religious groups. In the opinion of security officials, it was caused by a number of reasons: the flow of religious literature from abroad had increased; correspondence with foreign countries became easier; and the resistance was encouraged by the tense international situation (the events in Hungary) and the influence of those who had returned from prison.[79] The authorities tried to put an end

to this by arresting the most active clergymen in 1957 and 1958. However, the exortation by Bishop Matulionis and Bishop Steponavičius to defy the regime and demand rights did not develop into a more numerous movement in the second half of the 1950s.

In the 1960s the challenge was growing stronger and the support for an opposition movement was growing. One of the main reasons for the appearance of an opposition movement was the new offensive against the Church which the Soviets launched at the beginning of the decade. This attack buried all hopes of finding a modus vivendi. Although externally the pressure on the Catholic Church was not as strong as that on other religious faiths – the "flirting" with the Holy See had had an impact – the real activities of the Soviets were such that even the old advocate of the coexistence policy, Canon Stankevičius, started wavering: he refused to carry out all the demands of the Second Vatican Council and thus fell foul of the authorities. According to Canon Stankevičius, those who went to the Second Vatican Council were treated by the Soviet authorities "if not yet as party members, then at least as active atheists. In their opinion, our purpose in going to Rome, to the meeting, is to serve Communism."[80]

The efforts of the Soviets to adapt the new *Ostpolitik* of the Holy See to their own interests forced them to look for alternative ways of presenting information on the actual situation in Lithuania. The KGB tried to intercept illegal communication, but they failed, although a group of 11 priests (A. Dumbliauskas, P. Račiūnas, K. Ambrasas, and others) who sent material on the restrictions on the Catholic Church in Lithuania to the Vatican was uncovered in 1967.[81] The growing mood of opposition was shown by the refusal of the Panevėžys diocese to carry out the demand of the Soviets to appoint Canon Česlovas Krivaitis as head of the diocese after the exile of Bishop Steponavičius in 1961. The efforts of the Soviets to deprive the diocese of its leader and to interfere directly into its administration were doomed to failure, because the priests did not obey the orders of the RKRT officer, while the parishioners demonstrated their discontent when a parish was left without a priest. It was the fear of a conflict with churchgoers that drove the authorities to search for a compromise solution to this problem.[82] The number of priests who disregarded the restrictions on their activities imposed by the Soviets, or tried to circumvent them, was growing. Between 1961 and 1964, 33 priests

were deprived of their registration certificates for such violations.[83] Several priests from Aukštaitija, including Father Karolis Garuckas, Father Algimantas Keina and Father A. Taločka, were especially active during this period: in their sermons they spoke openly of illegal restrictions on the rights of the Church. The dissident movement in Russia which had started slightly earlier, the struggle of the Orthodox Church and Baptists for freedom of faith in the early 1960s, also contributed to the proliferation of the Catholic opposition movement in Lithuania. The beginning of this movement is usually associated with Father Vytautas Šlevas' letter of 7 August 1967 to the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Aleksey Kosygin.

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2 A. Ylius, *Prisiminimų fragmentai. Laisvės kovų archyvas* (LKA). Kaunas 1991, No 1, pp. 48-64

3 V.S. Vardys, *The Catholic Church, Dissent and Nationality in Soviet Lithuania*. New York 1978, p. 71

4 Report of the agent Jakubas of 12 April 1946. Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas (LYA), F. K-1, ap. 45, b. 71, l. 71

5 P. Gaidamavičius, *Nemarus mirtingasis. Arkivyskupas Teofilis Matulionis*. Rome 1981, p. 103

6 Report by Okhrimenko, the head of the 4th section of the "O" Department of the MGB of the USSR, on the conversation with Archbishop Reinys of 14 December 1946. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 45, b. 71, l. 246-253

7 Certificate of 6 August 1945 of the MGB of the LSSR "On the activities of the route agency among the clergy". Ibid, ap. 10, b. 22, l. 178-179

8 This document was published in the book: A. Baltinis, *Vyskupo Vincento Borisevičiaus gyvenimas ir darbai*. Rome 1975, pp. 144-148

9 Ibid, pp. 148-149

10 Report by Okhrimenko, head of the 4th section of the "O" Department of the MGB of the USSR, on the conversation with Archbishop Reinys of 14 December 1946. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 45, b. 71, l. 251

11 Report by Okhrimenko, head of the 4th section of the "O" Department of the MGB of the USSR, on the conversation with Bishop Ramanauskas of 4 December 1946. Ibid, b. 159, l. 197-198

12 Report by Okhrimenko, head of the 4th section of the "O" Department of the MGB of the USSR, on the conversation with Bishop Paltarokas of 28 December 1946. Ibid, b. 1272, l. 68

13 Report by Tchetchurov, head of the 1st section of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR, on the conversation with Archbishop Reinys of 11 January 1947. Ibid, b. 71, l. 107

14 Report of the agent Neris of 15 February 1947. Ibid, l. 107

15 Report of the agent Neris of 7 June 1947. Ibid, b. 1272, l. 73

16 Report on performance in August 1947 of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR in Kaunas. Ibid, ap. 14, b. 64, l. 101

17 Ibid, l. 102

18 J. Stankevičius, *Mano gyvenimo kryžkelės*. Manuscript, 1965, p. 277

19 Special report from P. Kapralov, security minister of the LSSR, to Dubrovin, head of the "O" Department of the MGB of the USSR, of 7 June 1949. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 69, l. 17-18

20 Complaint lodged by Fr S. Mikelkevičius to the Procurator General of the USSR. Ibid, criminal case No 43405/3, t. 2, l. 324-325

21 Report of 4 August 1945 of the MGB of the

LSSR on the result of the appeal of Prelate Jokūbauskis. Ibid, ap. 10, b. 22, l. 173

[22] Directive No. 47 of the RKRT of 20 January 1947 to its officer in Lithuania. Lietuvos centrinis valstybės archyvas (LCVA), F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 10, l. 8-10

[23] Plan of measures for 3 May 1947 of the Lazdijai Department of the MGB of the LSSR. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 15, b. 1578, l. 35

[24] Report of 23 October 1948 from the deputy minister for security, L. Martavičius, to the head of the "O" Department of the MGB of the USSR, Dubrovin. Ibid, ap. 10, b. 58, l. 4

[25] Report of the RKRT officer in Lithuania on the performance in the first quarter of 1947. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 12, l. 9

[26] Translation of the draft of the organisation of church committees, prepared by Canon J. Stankevičius, into Russian. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 55, l. 160-162

[27] Report of 23 October 1948 of the deputy minister for security, L. Martavičius, to Dubrovin, the head of the "O" Department of the MGB of the USSR. Ibid, ap. 10, b. 58, l. 10

[28] B. Puzinavičius. *Ketinimai surengti autokefalinę "katalikų" bažnyčią. Tautos atmintis.* 1977, No. 2, p. 51-54

[29] Report on performance in May 1947 of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR in Kaunas. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 14, b. 64, l. 58

[30] Memorandum from the RKRT vice chairman, J. Sadovski, to the vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, K. Voroshilov. Rusijos Federacijos valstybinis archyvas (RFVA), F. 6991, ap. 47, l. 19

[31] Circular of 11 September 1949 from the RKRT officer, B. Pušinis, to the chairmen of regional executive committees. Lietuvos centrinis valstybės archyvas (LCVA), F. R-181, ap. 3, l. 52

[32] Performance report of the RKRT officer for the third quarter of 1949. Ibid, b. 22, l. 57

[33] Information of 28 November 1949 from the RKRT officer to the chairman of the RKRT, I. Polianski. Ibid, b. 19, l. 30-32

[34] Memorandum of 17 October 1949 by the LSSR security minister, P. Kapralov, to the USSR security minister, P. Abakumov. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 10, l. 231

[35] Documents from the meeting of 25 November 1949 of the Central Committee of the CP of Lithuania. Lietuvos visuomeninių organizacijų archyvas (LVOA), F. 1771, ap. 51, b. 448, l. 6

[36] Report on performance in February 1948 of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR in Kaunas. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 14, b. 82, l. 20

[37] Directive of November 1946 from the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the LSSR. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 7, l. 35

[38] Report of Shliapnikov, head of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR, on the conversation with Bishop Paltarokas of 26 February 1948. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 45, b. 1272, l. 88-91

[39] Performance report of the RKRT officer for the third quarter of 1950. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 25, l. 37

[40] Special report of 27 June 1949 from the MGB of the LSSR to the USSR security minister, V. Abakumov. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 69, l. 309

[41] Minutes of the interrogation of Fr A. Šeškevičius of 17 June 1949. Ibid, criminal case No P-13229, l. 35-39

[42] Performance report for June 1949 of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 72, l. 109-113

[43] Statement of the establishment and legalising of the Aušros vartai college. Ibid, supplement to criminal case No. 43283/3; set of documents

[44] Certificate of 9 May 1950 of the MGB of the LSSR on the ban on the Holy Mary of Aušros Vartai children's organisation. Ibid, F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 94, l. 242

[45] Indictment in the criminal case of A. Kavaliauskas and others. Ibid, criminal case No 43287/3, t. 11, l. 256

[46] Report of the Central Committee of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party of Lithuania to the 7th Congress of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party of Lithuania. LVOA, F. 1771, ap. 131, b. 1, l. 228; reference of May 1953 by the MGB of the LSSR on anti-Soviet activities of the Catholic clergy of the LSSR. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 151, l. 197

[47] Memorandum of 6 August 1945 by the chancellor of the Vilnius archbishopric, Canon Basys, to the RKRT officer in Lithuania. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 4, l. 25-26

[48] Performance report for April 1948 of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR in Kaunas. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 14, b. 82, l. 56

[49] Performance report for May 1948 of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR in Kaunas.

Ibid, l. 61; Performance report for March 1949 of the "O" Department in Kaunas. Ibid, b. 90, l. 49

50 J. Juodaitis. *Praeities šešėliai*. Ms, p. 61

51 Performance report for April 1949 of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR in Kaunas. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 14, b. 90, l. 61-62

52 Special report of 15 January 1952 by the MGB of the LSSR on the arrest of the disseminators of illegal religious literature. Ibid, ap. 10, b. 140, l. 103-104

53 Information of 9 May 1949 by the RKRT officer, B. Pušinis, to the RKRT chairman, I. Polianski. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 18, l. 25

54 P. Gaidamavičius, op cit, p. 106

55 Reference of May 1953 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the LSSR on anti-Soviet activities of the Catholic clergy. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 151, l. 198

56 V. Skuodis, *Dvasinis genocidas Lietuvoje*. Vilnius 1997, p. 22

57 Memorandum of 20 September 1950 by the RKRT officer to the chairman of the executive committee of Šiauliai. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 24, l. 64

58 Shorthand record of the conversation between the RKRT chairman, I. Polianski, and Canon Stankevičius, on 29 November 1949. RKRT, F. 6991, ap. 3, b. 8, l. 197-200

59 Memorandum of 30 May 1950 by the RKRT officer to the RKRT chairman. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 1, b. 41, l. 58

60 J. Stankevičius, op cit, p. 271

61 Performance report for the 4th quarter of 1950 by the RKRT officer. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 25, l. 72

62 Canon Stankevičius' remarks on his conversation with B. Pušinis. The archive of the Kaunas diocese, b. 220

63 Reference of 20 March 1953 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs on Bishop Paltarokas' anti-Soviet activities. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 45, b. 1272, l. 14-15; note of 23 October 1953 by the deputy minister of internal affairs of the LSSR, L. Martavičius, to the secretary of the Central Committee of the LCP, A. Sniečkus. Ibid, l. 17-18

64 Performance report of the RKRT officer for the 4th quarter of 1952. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 3, b. 32, l. 146

65 For more, see: A. Streikus, *Sovietų valdžios antibažnytinė veikla 1953–1967 m. Genocidas ir rezistencija*, 1997, No 1, pp. 122-159

66 Performance report of the RKRT officer for the first six months of 1958. LVOA, F. 1771, ap. 194, b. 9, l. 31

67 Information of 22 November 1956 by the RKRT officer to A. Sniečkus. Ibid, ap. 193, b. 10, l. 39

68 Report of 13 September 1957 by the agent Liepa. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 45, b. 98, l. 55

69 Letter of 3 January 1958 by Bishop Matulionis to the Council of Ministers of the LSSR. Ibid, b. 97, l. 389

70 Performance report of the RKRT officer for the second half of 1955. LVOA, F. 1771, ap. 192, b. 10, l. 176

71 Report on the search of the flat of A. Česnulevičiūtė conducted on 18 January 1958. LYA, criminal case No. 44608/3, t. 1, p. 89-91

72 Indictment in the criminal case of Fr A. Markevičius. Ibid, p. 217

73 Certificate by the interrogator Andriushov of the KGB of the LSSR. Ibid, criminal case 42424/3, t. 3, p. 100

74 Performance report of the RKRT officer for 1960. LVOA, F. 1771, ap. 16, l. 19

75 Certificate of 28 November 1952 by the MGB of the LSSR on the investigation of the case "The Jackals". LYA, F. K-1, ap. 10, b. 143, l. 154-158

76 Newsletter of the "O" Department of the MGB of the LSSR on the operation records and agent network of 21 February 1949. Ibid, b. 83, l. 27

77 Performance report of the 3rd Department of the 4th Board of the KGB of the LSSR for 1957. Ibid, ap. 3, b. 500, l. 91

78 Performance report of the KGB of the LSSR for 1958. Ibid, ap. 10, b. 250, l. 253

79 Performance report of the 3rd Department of the 4th Board of the KGB of the LSSR for 1956 – 1 April 1957. Ibid, ap. 3, b. 500, l. 89

80 J. Stankevičius, op cit, p. 520

81 Plan of activities for the second quarter of 1967 of the 2nd Department of the 2nd Board of the KGB of the LSSR. LYA, F. K-1, ap. 3, b. 63, l. 14

82 Report of 4 February 1963 of the LSSR KGB on the situation in the Panevėžys diocese. Ibid, b. 39, l. 112-114

83 Information of 28 November 1965 by the RKRT officer to the vice chairman of the RKRT, V. Riazanov. LCVA, F. R-181, ap. 1, b. 148, l. 19

Lithuanian partisans on an operation (location unknown)

Lithuanian partisans (location unknown)

Partisans from the Algimantas region

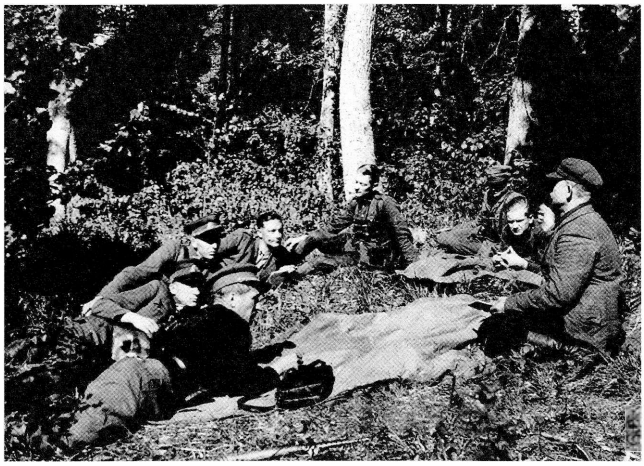
Partisans from the Butegeidis Company of the Šarūnas unit of the Algimantas region in 1950

Partisans of the Šarūnas unit of the Algimantas region in Ramuldavos forests

The leader of the Dainavos region, Adolfas Ramanauskas, presents an award to Sofija Budenaitė (alias Ramunė) in 1947

Partisan Bronius Šalaševičius

Partisans take the oath of allegiance (Vytenis group, Šarūnas unit, Dainavos region)



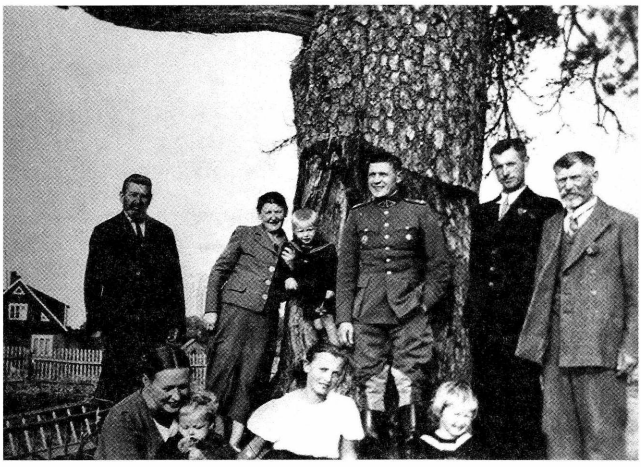
Partisans in conference (Šarūnas unit, Dainavos region)

Partisans of the Šarūnas unit of the Dainavos region

Partisans (Merkys unit, Dainavos region) receive awards in 1947

Partisans of the Dainavos region

Partisans in southern Lithuania



General Jonas Žemaitis and his family (1939)

Partisans from the Vytautas region of northeast Lithuania

Partisans from the Jonas Vepštas-Paukštelis Company of the Vytis region

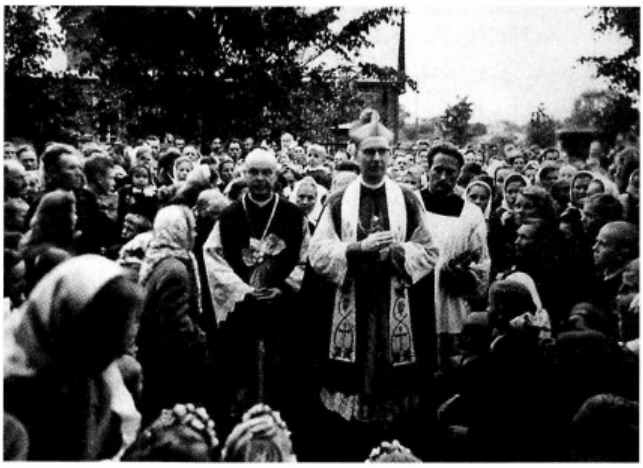
Colonel Adolfas Ramanauskas, the leader of the armed forces of the Lithuanian Movement for the Fight for Freedom

Partisans from the Vytis region in Raguva Forest in 1945

Partisans of the Vėtra and Paukštelis companies of the Vytis region

Corpses of partisans from the Dainavos region

Representatives from the clergy from all religions at a peace conference in Moscow (9–12 May 1952)



Bishop Julijonas Steponavičius in Žagarė

The Resistance Movement against the Soviet Regime in Latvia between 1940 and 1941

JURIS CIGANOVS

Between 1918 and 1940 Latvia was an independent state. Until 15 May 1934 it was a parliamentary republic. After this date the country was governed by the authoritarian regime of Karlis Ulmanis. In the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed on 23 August 1939 Latvia was included into the Soviet sphere of interest. In October of the same year Latvia was forced to sign a treaty with the USSR, which prescribed the setting up of Soviet army bases in the country. With the Second World War raging in Europe, Latvia could not hope for any real assistance from the Western Allies.

After the subjugation of Poland, the two aggressors, Germany and the Soviet Union, flanked the Baltic states. The government of Latvia still hoped to preserve, if not complete then at least partial, independence, through cautious diplomatic manoeuvering, treaties and compromises.[1] Official policy was based on the national principles. Although the war in Europe caused some difficulty, Latvia had a balanced economy, an active cultural life, an extremely successful education system and a high standard of living.[2]

But the fate of the Latvian state had already been decided. On 17 June 1940 Soviet troops occupied Latvia without meeting any resistance. The president and prime minister, Karlis Ulmanis, reluctant to take upon himself responsibility for the state and the lives of its citizens, ordered everybody to remain in their places. There was some hope that the country would preserve at least formal independence. The People's Government of Latvia, formed by the Soviet emissary Andrey Vishinsky and presided over by Professor Augusts Kirhenšteins, promised the citizens of Latvia a democratic Saeima (parliament) and adherence to the constitution. But their illusions were soon shattered. On 14 and 15 July 1940 hurried elections to the "people's parliament" took place, for which only one list of communist candidates, approved in Moscow, was presented. All attempts to put up alternative candidates failed. The new parliament voted for the incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union, thus violating the constitution. All this happened with the formal

approval of President Ulmanis, who was controlled by the Soviet authorities. On 22 July 1940 Ulmanis was deported to Russia. Within two months the state was incorporated into a foreign empire. Latvia entered the reign of communist terror. The material wealth was plundered, spiritual values debased, the economy reorganised, and untrusted personnel removed. Finally, the standard of living declined rapidly and monetary reform devalued in one stroke all the citizens' savings.

Latvian patriots and the armed forces were ready to fight for their freedom. However, they were not prepared for action at a zero hour, which came in 1940 when, contrary to all official assumptions, the independence of Latvia was lost. A few isolated cases where Latvian army units and members of the paramilitary organisation Aizsargi opposed the Soviet troops are recorded.[3] Several prominent Latvian officers committed suicide in the summer of 1940, Colonel Fricis Celmiņš, Commander of the General Staff Information (counterintelligence) Department, and General Ludwigs Bolšteins, Commander of the Border Guards' Brigade, among them. Colonel Celmiņš had managed to destroy most of the Information Department documents before the Soviet tanks reached Riga, saving many Latvian intelligence officers abroad.[4] In protest against the beginning of the Soviet occupation Jānis Gailis, a participant in the liberation struggle and an official of the Ministry of the Interior Political Police, shot himself at the Freedom Monument in the centre of Riga on 27 June.

As the summer drew to an end, the anti-Soviet mood strengthened. It manifested itself in various ways. First of all, the number of people seeking to leave the country increased. With German repatriation, about 100,000 Latvians also emigrated to Germany. At the end of the summer anti-Soviet activities by young people started. By September anti-Soviet and anti-Russian groups had been formed.[5] As in most cases, the members of such groups lacked experience in underground work; they often turned into debating clubs, where the latest news and foreign radio broadcasts were discussed. The struggle was widespread; however, for most of the time it was chaotic and amateurish. It was poorly organised and suffered heavy losses. The most active and relatively efficient section of the anti-Soviet youth movement turned out to be the legal youth organisations of the 1920s and 1930s; mainly jaunsargi (Scouts) and mazpulcēni, which demonstrates the essential role of such organisations in the nurturing of a nationally active generation.[6]

The anti-Soviet campaigns in schools mostly took the form of distributing leaflets or hoisting the national flag. Members of such groups often gathered to sing patriotic songs. The official beginning of the academic year in the Great Hall of the University of Latvia on 1 September turned into an anti-Soviet demonstration and ended with the arrest of several participants. The beginning of the school year was marked by spontaneous anti-Soviet demonstrations and the distribution of leaflets in many Latvian schools (e.g., Cesis Secondary School, Jelgavas Secondary School No1, Daugavpils Secondary School No1, Riga State Polytechnic). In many schools small, poorly organised anti-Soviet groups sprang up. Since very often members did not even try to conceal their opinions, the Soviet security services eliminated these groups in a relatively short time, arresting the most active participants. The failure of the struggle can be explained by the lack of experienced leaders and also by the circumstance that once a single member of such a group had been arrested, the NKVD could apply its methods of interrogation and find out the names of the rest.

In spite of everything, youth resistance groups managed to organise one combined campaign. On 13 May 1941 at an appointed hour 5,000 leaflets were distributed in Riga, Jelgava, Cesis, Bauska, Tukums and other towns.[7] Some youth resistance groups joined the national underground organisations which tried to unite the anti-Soviet movement.

The formation of the national anti-Soviet underground started in the autumn of 1940 when, during September and October, independently of each other, several large anti-Soviet organisations came into existence. In October 1940, a month and a half after the beginning of the Soviet occupation, the Riga Polytechnic student Vladimirs Kļaviņš, nicknamed the Falcon, founded an organisation which later became known as Tēvijas Sargi (Defenders of the Homeland).[8] The aim of Tēvijas Sargi was to overthrow the Soviet government and re-establish the Republic of Latvia. The organisation consisted of three departments: the Propaganda Department, the Foreign Relations Department and the War Department (later called the Intelligence Department).[9] Each one had its own strictly defined functions.

The task of the Propaganda Department was to increase public support for the organisation and inform citizens about its existence and reassure them that there were people who were not indifferent to their suffering. The organi-

sation published the illegal newspaper *Ziņotājs* (Messenger), which went through six issues. The first had a print run of 30 or 40 copies, the last 80 copies.[10] There were close links between the War Department and the Foreign Relations Department.

The War Department played an essential role within the structure of the organisation because its main aim was to organise an armed rebellion against the Soviet regime in Latvia. The commander of the War Department was Laimonis Sala (1916–1941), a lieutenant in the 24th Territorial Riflemen's Corps.[11] The War Department gathered information about Red Army military objects in Latvia and collected weapons for the coming armed struggle. The leaders of the organisation understood that without outside support any uprising would be doomed to failure. They sought help from Nazi Germany, a state which they considered to be the natural enemy of the Soviet Union and therefore a friend of the Latvian nation. (At that time most Latvians nursed such unrealistic notions.)

To promote contacts with Germany, the Foreign Relations Department was formed. They managed to establish contacts with the German army intelligence agent in Latvia, Hans Shinke, and his deputy, Arvīds Strunke. They provided Tēvijas Sargi with a radio transmitter, informing them that instructions on how and when to use it would be sent later. What did German intelligence hope to gain from this contact? Mostly data about the Soviet troops. They were even ready to pay for the information. German intelligence was also interested in the organisation's combat groups, which were located in Riga, Ventspils, Dobele, Ludza, Slokam and Limbaži.[12]

Almost at the same time as Tēvijas Sargi, several other anti-Soviet organisations came into existence. In October 1940 the Kaujas Organizācija Latvijas Atbrīvošanai (KOLA, Combat Organisation for the Liberation of Latvia) was established. Its leader was the student Teodors Gulbis (1917–1941). KOLA consisted of several brigades in Riga, Jelgava, Saldus, Tukums, Dobele and Daugavpils, with a coordination centre in Riga. Gulbis testified that it had about 200 members.[13] KOLA established contacts with the Lithuanian resistance movement. In November 1940 Gulbis met a Lithuanian called Gribauskis through whom contacts with the Lithuanian anti-Soviet organisation Geležinis vilkas (Iron Wolf) were established. Eager to coordinate the resistance movements of the three Baltic states, Gulbis planned to organise an illegal meeting

of the underground representatives from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in Riga. KOLA also had contacts with the German intelligence agent in Riga.

In October 1940 another organisation, Jaunlatvieši (New Latvians), was founded. Jaunlatvieši, whose founder was Edgars Ruja (1915–1941), an inspector with the Latvian SSR Local Industry Administration, was the largest underground organisation. By the spring of 1940 about 600 people had joined it. At the head of Jaunlatvieši was the experienced former lieutenant colonel, Emīls Grapmanis (1903–1989). By the spring of 1941 the organisation had about 20 groups. Each group had from 20 to 30 members who in turn were divided into two or three subgroups. Jaunlatvieši published its own illegal newspaper *Tautas Balss* (The Voice of the People), and performed several acts of sabotage. The first major act of sabotage was in Liepaja on 6 November 1940 where the Vulkāns match factory was set on fire.[14] Among the members of the organisation were many army officers who formed a separate group under Lieutenant Colonel Voldemārs Veiss (1899–1944) and the former members of the paramilitary organisation Aizsargi and retired officers. This organisation was the most powerful of all the anti-Soviet groups.

At the end of the summer of 1940 the Latvijas Nacionālais Leģions (LNL, Latvian National Legion) was created. It was conceived of as a unifying organisation embracing the whole of Latvia, and its ultimate aim was the restoration of the independent Latvian state. The leadership was in the hands of Jānis Tamanis, an instructor at the Amateur Flying Club, Alfons Kalns, a Baltic German whose father had been an officer in the Latvian army, and Jānis Dāvis, a former Latvian rifleman. They planned to unite the existing and recently formed anti-Soviet groups in Latvia. Counting on success, as there were strong anti-Soviet feelings among the population, they suggested that the structure of the LNL should be military, with a strong hierarchy and centralised leadership and structural units such as squads, battalions, divisions and corps. In the autumn of 1940 representatives of the LNL visited different regions to persuade the underground groups to join a larger organisation, which the LNL purported to be.[15] But the leaders of the LNL were hardly qualified for such a serious task, as they lacked experience, authority and contacts. The attempt to offer the military command of the LNL to the former Latvian army colonel Roberts Briesma (1891–1941) was unsuccessful. The official head of the German repatriation office in Riga also rejected

the clumsy LNL attempts to establish contacts. Finally KOLA helped the LNL to make contact with the Germans.[16] By the end of 1940 several small anti-Soviet organisations had been formed: Dzelzs Gvarde (Iron Guard), Jaunā Latvija (New Latvia), Vanagi (Hawks) and Latviešu Tautas Apvienība (Union of the Latvian Nation), but many members of these groups joined the abovementioned larger organisations.

Although all the organisations acted independently, they maintained contacts with each other through messengers. So KOLA had contacts with Tēvijas Sargi, the LNL and Dzelzs Gvarde.[17] There was a plan to create one coordination centre to unite the anti-Soviet underground in Latvia, but it was not carried out, because in March 1941 the Soviet security service discovered almost all the largest illegal groups and organisations. In April the leaders of Tēvijas Sargi, Jaunlatvieši, KOLA and the LNL were arrested. The networks of these underground groups were partially destroyed and many members arrested. Others suspended their activities. The question whether these people, many of whom were novices, would have started an armed revolt without the parent organisations remains unanswered. It can be assumed that the Soviet regime destroyed these underground organisations. The first period in the resistance movement was over.

The turning point in the collective consciousness of the Latvian people was the events of 13 and 14 June 1941 when in one night 16,000 Latvians were deported to the eastern regions of the Soviet Union. Many in this and in successive deportations perished behind prison walls – a total of 34,700 people, or two per cent of the population. It is not surprising that this year is remembered as an *annus horribilis*. Hatred, pain, a sense of hopelessness and helplessness, provoked by these events, urged thousands of people to take concrete action. The chance to act came on 22 June 1941 when the war between Germany and the USSR broke out.

Immediately after 14 June, many Latvians decided upon a radical course of action. The first partisan groups sprang up in the woods. For example, in Tervete, the commander of the local paramilitary group, Žanis Butkuss (b. 1906), after his family had been deported, remained in the forest and, gathering around him a group of partisans, started to fight the Soviet regime. Similar groups of partisans, or "green" groups, were formed in the forests near Ventspils, in the vicinity of Dundaga, at Ragana and Inčukalns near Riga.[18]

On 22 June, on the outbreak of the Soviet-German war, the partisan movement became universal. Everybody hoped that their sufferings had come to an end and that Germany would defeat the Red Army and restore the independent Latvian state. For the first time in history the Latvian people greeted the German army as liberators from the Soviet yoke. Later, they were bitterly disappointed. During the very first days of the war the partisans made their presence felt. At first they acted without any coordination, damaging railways and communication lines, and attacking retreating Red Army units. In many rural districts the inhabitants organised defence units which consisted mainly of former policemen, paramilitaries and deserters from the Red Army. These units tried to prevent looting and the requisition of food, horses and vehicles.[19]

In the first days of the war mass desertions from the 24th Territorial Riflemen's Corps started. Often whole units, led by their commanders, deserted. For example, the Signals Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Kārlis Aperāts (1891–1944), took cover in the forest near Carnikava after receiving an order to board a train and leave for Russia.[20] The same course of action was taken by the 285th Riflemen's Regiment (the former 7th Sigulda Infantry Regiment) under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Jānis Avotiņš (1896–1965) near Alūksne.

Members of underground organisations who had escaped arrest augmented the partisan units. The supply of runaway soldiers grew thanks to the order "On the Demobilisation of Latvian SSR Citizens from the Red Army" issued on 1 July. Many demobilised persons received a document which indicated that the reason for demobilisation was Paragraph 93b of the Demobilisation Rules, "politically unreliable"; but in wartime such people were often eliminated by military patrols. Therefore, most demobilised soldiers considered it safer to hide in the forests. Only about 3,000 Latvian soldiers retreated with the Red Army,[21] while the partisans gained many military experts.

Several groups led by active and expert commanders not only defended themselves, but also attacked the enemy. The groups varied in size and strength; some of them had more than 100 members. The partisans liberated many towns before the German troops arrived. On 2 July a unit led by Lieutenant Voldemars Pauls took control of Sigulda. On 5 July, partisans commanded by Colonel Arvids Kripens (1893–1968) blocked the Pskov road and captured Smiltene. In Riga two large groups operated. One was led by Lieutenant Colo-

nel Victor Hasmanis (1892–1984) in Mežaparks, the other by Lieutenant Jānis Vilips in Bolderaja. A large group of the 24th Territorial Riflemen's Corps commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Aperats acted in the region around Madona and Gulbene.[22] Here Aperats started to recruit for the Latvian Division. Reinforcements came from the summer military training camps in Litene and Ostroviesi from which every day Latvian soldiers deserted, alone or in groups. The new division had already formed an artillery unit and a staff of officers. It grew to 2,000 fighters.[23]

The bloodiest clashes with the Red Army occurred on 4 July in Limbaži, on 5 July near Olaine and on 9 July in Alūksne. The partisans captured all these towns before the German troops came. Latvian military bases were established in more than 30 towns and rural districts.[24]

With the advance of the German army into Latvia, the German military command tried to take control of the partisan movement. On 1 July the German naval commander A. Klasen issued an order to the former Latvian military attaché in Germany, Colonel Alexander Plensners, to supervise the formation of Latvian defence forces. On 6 July the staff of the defence forces was formed in Riga. The chief of staff was Lieutenant Colonel Victor Deglavs.[25] Within a week the defence staff had formed 46 riflemen detachments, six machine-gun detachments and one cavalry detachment, which were sent to different areas to work with the existing partisan units. The newly formed Latvian defence forces consisted of 6,000 to 8,000 people.[26] But the Germans had no plans to create larger Latvian military units or to restore the independence of Latvia. Therefore, on 8 July 1941 the chief of police and SS General Stahlecker issued an order stating that security in the rear zone was his responsibility and prohibiting the wearing of non-German uniforms. All the defence and partisan units were ordered to disarm.[27] The first Latvian defence forces were dismissed, soon to be formed again under German supervision.

1 A. Bērziņš, *Lielo notikumu priekšvakarā*. New York, "Grāmatu Draugs", 1976, pp. 234-235

2 T. Vilciņš, *Skolu jaunatne nacionālajā cīņā*. Latvijas Valsts arhīvs (LVA), Rīga 1997, p. 5

3 A Latvian army unit located near Lake Ušuri in the Madona region started firing at Soviet troops. Several clashes occurred in Ventspils and Liepaja when the paramilitary organisation Aizsargi was disarmed

4 *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā*. Vasteras: Daugavas Vanagu izd., Vol. I, pp. 137-138

5 J. Ozols, *Latviešu nacionālās pretošanās kustība 1940.–1945. Kara invalīds*. 1983,

No 28, pp. 28-29

6 T. Vilciņš, *Skolu jaunatne nacionālajā cīņā.* LVA, Rīga, 1997, p. 29

7 J. Ozols, op cit, p. 29

8 Interrogation record of Vladimirs Klavinš. LVA, F. 1983, 1.apr., 7326.1., 2, sēj., p. 14

9 Ibid

10 There are some copies of *Ziņotājs* in the Latvian War Museum

11 In accordance with the ruling passed by the LSSR People's Commissars' Council on 27 August 1940, the Latvian army was incorporated into the Red Army as the 24th Territorial Riflemen's Corps within the Special Baltic War Region

12 In March 1941 the KGB arrested German intelligence agents in Latvia. During interrogation the Soviet secret services acquired information about the underground organisation Tēvijas Sargi. On 8 March several members of the organisation were arrested. Gradually the Soviet authorities discovered other illegal organisations. Testimonies have been preserved in interrogation records in the KGB archives

13 Other members of KOLA also gave a similar number

14 LVA, F. 1899, 2.apr., 7.1., p. 1

15 LVA, F. 1986, 1.apr., 9424.1., 1.sēj., pp. 227-230

16 This information was given by Teodors Gulbis during his interrogation by the NKVD. LVA, F. 1986, 1.apr., 41247.1., p. 20. Cooperation between Latvian resistance movement groups was confirmed by other members

17 Anti-Soviet organisations were led by amateurs. They were not familiar with the principles of conspiracy. Members of the organisations were not ready for the underground struggle. Participants in the resistance movement were often betrayed by collaborators

18 *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā.* Vol. 1, p. 267

19 A. Upmalis, *Latviešu kaujas vienību darbība Latvijā 1941. gada jūnijs–jūlijs.* Rīga, 1994, p. 21

20 *Sakaru bataljona kaprāļa M. Kārkliņa atmiņas.* LMK 4–157 / dk–p

21 V. Samsons, *Latviešu kartotēkas darbinieku grupas konfidenciāls pārskats par attlieksmi pret vācu okupācijas varu Latvijā. Latvijas suverenitātes ideja likteņgriežos.* Rīga Zvaigzne, 1990, p. 75

22 *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā.* p. 267

23 B.A. *Traģiskais gals. Daugavas Vanagu Mēnešraksts.* 1970, Vol. 3, p. 17

24 Ibid

25 *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā.* p. 278

26 A. Upmalis, *Latviešu kaujas vienību darbība Latvijā 1941. gada jūnijs–jūlijs.* Rīga, p. 36

27 *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā.* p. 278

The Resistance in Latvia during the Nazi Occupation (July 1941 – May 1945)

VINETA ROLMANE

CHAPTER 1. THE POLICY OF THE NAZI REGIME IN LATVIA

On 22 June 1941 Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union. By 7 July Latvia had been occupied in toto. The communist regime was replaced by the Nazi regime, which regarded Latvia as a conquered part of the Soviet Union and acted as in an occupied country. It took over national and local government, collected taxes and imposed conscription.

The status of the Baltic states was determined at a meeting at Hitler's office on 16 July 1941. Hitler's counsellor for the eastern regions, Alfred Rosenberg, the chief of the state office, Heinrich Lammers, the chief of the armed forces, General Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, the Reich Marshal, Hermann Goering, and the leader of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSGWP), Martin Bormann, participated in the meeting. It was decided that the Baltic states would become a region of the Reich.

At the meeting Hitler also reiterated that "it's the iron law: not to allow anybody to be armed but the Germans", and gave instructions that the occupying power should act as the bearer of freedom.[1] According to Hitler's order on the government of the occupied eastern regions, issued on 17 July 1941, it was announced that at the end of military activity in those regions a civilian government would replace the military one, and it would take orders from the minister for the occupied eastern regions, Alfred Rosenberg. Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Belarus and several regions of Russia would make up the Reich commissariat called Ostland. Heinrich Lohse was appointed Reich commissar for the region.

The Reich commissariat of Ostland was divided into four general regions. The former mayor of Libeka, Dr Otto Drechsler, was appointed general commissar of Latvia.[2] The so-called Latvian government, with General Oskars Dankers as the head, created by the Nazis, was nothing more than just some bureaucrats who were instructed to publish and carry out Nazi orders. It was not a collective institution: every general director was under the influence of the leader of the appropriate section of the general commissariat.[3] All Latvian

military and civilian power, and control of the economy, was under the Nazi government. Lohse's order of 18 August 1941 stated that the German civilian authority in all the regions governed by the Reich commissariat of Ostland took possession of all the movable and immovable property formerly belonging to the republics of the Soviet Union.[4]

The Nazi plans, the widest and most important being the Generalplan Ost (the Eastern General Plan) worked out by the NSGWP, the Reich's Chief Security Board, Chief SS Board and Eastern Ministry, were not for public knowledge and were usually stamped "secret". It was not the restoration of the independence of the Republic of Latvia that was envisaged, but the colonisation of the country and the germanisation of its inhabitants.[5]

Many Latvians considered the Nazis as liberators. But Nazi policy in Latvia changed this opinion. They restricted civilians in political and economic life. Besides, other deeds revealed the real policy of the Nazis towards Latvia: for example, renaming the streets, squares and parks in Riga, setting the time to German time,[6] a special restaurant for German citizens, double the food rations for those belonging to the Reich, the envisaged ban on the civil defence organisation Aizsargi and the Latvian Union House,[7] renaming the Latvian National Opera the Riga Opera, and making German the official language.[8] All this promoted the growth of the resistance.

The resistance movement in Latvia was not coordinated. There was a national resistance movement, a communist resistance movement, the Polish National Resistance movement, as well as isolated activities – like sabotage, hiding deserters from the Latvian SS Voluntary Legion and hiding Jews.

The resistance movement was influenced by the fact that during the Second World War there were two great powers claiming Latvia – Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Liberation from the Nazi occupation would mean returning to the communist occupation. Latvia had no government in exile, no armed forces either in Latvia or another country. The fate of the Latvian embassies was decided by the governments of the corresponding countries.

CHAPTER 2. ACTIVITIES OF PARTISAN GROUPS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NAZI OCCUPATION (22 JUNE–7 JULY 1941)

At the beginning of the war many people in Latvia were not aware of the real plans of the Nazis regarding Latvia. The persecution experienced during

the communist occupation evoked hatred and the wish to free the country from the communist occupation as soon as possible. As the Nazi army approached, Latvian partisan units took action. They expected the Nazi army to set Latvia free from the communist regime. Partisans fought the withdrawing units of the Red Army and, in the territories that were set free from communists, restored public administration in the form it used to be in before the Soviet occupation. Part of the population regarded the situation as the right moment for the restoration of the independent Republic of Latvia.

Much information about the activities of partisan units can be found in the Latvian periodicals and newspapers printed during the period of the Nazi occupation. However, the information is often exaggerated because the reports on the activities of the partisans were used as propaganda material to create an image of the Nazis as liberators. There is plenty of memoir-based information about the partisans.[9] They are mentioned in the book *Latviešu Legions*[10] by Colonel Arturs Silgailis, who served in the general inspection of the Latvian SS Voluntary Legion. The phenomenon has been researched by professors Andrievs Ezergailis[11] and Haralds Biezais[12]; Professor Jekabs Ozols[13] and Eriks Pārups[14] (a participant in the resistance movement) have written about it, too.

From the material mentioned above, we can conclude that groups of partisans were formed and acted all over Latvia. Several of them were set up during the period of the Soviet occupation, especially after the 14 June 1941 deportations, when people collected guns to be ready for military action or sabotage. These groups did not form a united body, because continuous arrests ruined any wider action and thinned out already established groups. With the beginning of the war on 22 June, many Latvians joined the partisans. The partisan units consisted mainly of former army officers, soldiers, civil defence guards – *aizsargi* (members of the Aizsargi organisation), Latvian policemen and other politically active people. Control was often taken by former Latvian army officers and instructors. The size of the groups varied from 20 to 300 men.[15] They prevented communists from blowing up and burning houses and taking away prisoners. There were also some individual partisans acting on their own. It is necessary to add that there were also negative traits arising from the hatred of communists: people were dealt with without their guilt being proven, often just according to groundless denunciations.

The Nazis had foreseen that people in the Baltic states would fight against

the communists and planned to use this to their advantage. The former Latvian military attaché in Germany, Aleksandrs Plensners, was recruited by the Abwehr (the intelligence branch of the Wehrmacht). He served as a contact, receiving the Abwehr's instructions and sending them to the resistance groups in Latvia, which remained ignorant of the fact that their leaders were being instructed by the German army.[16] Besides, there existed a network of people relied on by the Nazis who took instructions from the Abwehr.[17] On 3 July, on his arrival in Liepaja, Plensners was granted full powers by the officer commanding the Baltic fleet, Rear Admiral Klasen, to take over the organisation of the Latvian Defence Forces in the coastal regions captured by the German navy. He reported to the Nazi general commanding the forces in those regions[18]. After the capture of Liepaja, special rules for organising the Latvian Defence Forces[19] were issued. They stipulated that the Defence Forces were to help the police, which would receive ammunition and instructions from the Nazi army, and that there should be no more than two per cent of the inhabitants organised for defence.

After the communists had left Riga, on the morning of 1 July, Latvian officers, policemen, students and others gathered in the Latvian Union House in Riga. They were volunteers, ready to fight against communists.[20] Vilis Hazners wrote in his memoirs that there were thousands of men, many of them in Latvian army uniforms, waiting for guns and being organised into units. Officers gathered at the commandant's headquarters with the permission of the Nazi leaders.[22] The commandant was Lieutenant-Colonel Voldemārs Veiss (1897–1944).[21] It follows that the formation of the defence units in Riga was under the control of the Nazis. On 1 July an order from Veiss, as the provisional head of the Public Order Service, appeared in *Tēvija*: all citizens possessing guns without permits issued by the Public Order Service, were to surrender the guns immediately.[23] On 5 July, when Plensners arrived in Riga, he took over the leadership of the defence force there, thus exceeding the powers given to him by the Nazis. That caused his dismissal. On 7 July the commander of Einsatzgruppe A (one of the four Reich Chief Security Boards which organised mobile killing units), SS General Walter Stahlecker, appointed Veiss leader of the defence service.[24]

The activities of the partisan groups can be divided into two periods. The first period lasted from the first days of the war until 1 July, when the partisan units, on their own initiative, fought the withdrawing Red Army and had al-

ready established order before the Nazis appeared. For example, in the night of 23 June, partisans led by Captain Ola entered the town of Priekule near Liepāja.[25] On 28 June, partisans led by Corporal Žanis Butkuss (head of the Tērvete section of the Aizsargi organisation) took the *pagasts* (small rural district) council of Tervete;[26] on 26 June, the partisans established order in Ventspils,[27] on 29 June, in Talsi partisans took the council of Nesaule,[29] and on 28 June, the council of Serene.[30] Strong partisan groups were formed by the officers and soldiers of three signal service companies which had escaped from the military camp in Litene, one of the organisers of the escape being Lieutenant-Colonel Aperats (1901–1944). These partisans became the core of the partisan groups of the pagasts in the district.[31] On 2 July, partisans led by Lieutenant Paulis took Sigulda (the Nazi army entered Sigulda only on 4 July).[32]

The second period lasted from 1 to 7 July, when Nazi-recruited mercenaries, who were volunteers with the aim of clearing Latvia of communists, were sent to help the local partisans. In the morning of 5 July, partisans from the Valmiera district entered Valmiera, hoisting the national flag in the places liberated on their way. In the city they met Latvians led by Lieutenant Colonel Jaunsnikeris[33] who, according to an order issued on 4 July, had become the chief of the Nazi-organised defence in the cities of Valka and Valmiera and in the corresponding districts.[34] On 4 July, a battle broke out between the communists and partisans from Olaine, who received reinforcements from Riga.[35] On 3 July, the defence forces led by Lieutenant Colonel Reke moved from Riga towards Limbaži, where in the night of 5 July a six-hour battle between Soviet sailors and policemen on one side, and Reke's men, reinforced by partisans who had joined them on their way towards Limbaži, on the other side, took place.[36]

The partisan units were disbanded by Stahlecker's order of 7 July, when Lieutenant Colonel Veiss was appointed commander of the defence forces and all voluntary military units not controlled by the Nazis were banned. The defence forces, also called the auxiliary police formation, were under Nazi control. The only document about the action of the partisans is Plensners's report to the 291st Infantry Division, which was an overview of the formation of the defence units and the struggle during the period between the arrival of the German army and 9 July.[37] The document stated that the partisans had been active all over Latvia and that, while during the first days action had been

on some leaders' personal initiative, from 1 July the organisation and leadership of separate action groups had been started in accordance with Nazi instructions. He also stated that the partisan units had about 6,000 men.

Besides the partisan action, there was also an attempt to take over political power on the civil side. On 1 July, 1941 Latvian army officers met in the Latvian Union House in Riga and founded the Latvian Organisation Centre (LOC).[38] In cooperation with the Perkonkrusts (Thunder Cross) organisation and corporations, it nominated the former minister of transport in the government of Kārlis Ulmanis, Bernhards Einbergs, to form a cabinet of ministers. On 3 July the LOC and some journalists published the newspaper *Briva Zeme*, but it was immediately closed.[39] On 3 July Einbergs visited Stahlecker to introduce the new cabinet to him. Stahlecker rejected the cabinet and announced that the issue of the Latvian government would be decided in Berlin.[40] It became obvious then that the independence of Latvia would not be restored by the Nazis. This was shown clearly by an instruction by Commandant Colonel Petersen, published in *Tēvija* on 7 July: "Lately some people have been wilfully holding different posts, and central organisations of the pre-Bolshevik period have been restored. Activities like these are inadmissible and will be punished."[41]

In its early stages the resistance movement of the Nazi occupation period, which was characterised by partisan activities based on the illusion that the time to restore independence had come, was suppressed. As it developed, it aimed at the restoration of the independent Republic of Latvia, and opposed both the communist and the Nazi occupation.

CHAPTER 3. FORMATION OF THE UNITED CENTRE OF THE RESISTANCE IN LATVIA

At the end of 1941 some civilians started organising for the resistance movement. The most active of the civil democrats formed an illegal group that was led by a professor at the University of Latvia, Konstantins Čakste (1901–1945). Active members of the group were: Senator Mintauts Čakste (1893–1962); the professor of economics, Arnolds Aizsilnieks (1898–1982); the doctor of archaeology, Voldemars Ginters (neither of whom had been involved in active political life before); the former ambassador and foreign minister, Ludvigs Sēja; the former secretary of the Saeima (parliament of Latvia), Jānis Breikšs; and Pastor Jānis Terins, a representative of the Christian Labour group in the

fourth Saeima. The group was well organised, with over 300 members, mostly students, operating in Riga. Cells were also founded in Jelgava, Liepaja and Ventspils, as well as in rural centres. The aim of this political group was the restoration of independent, democratic Latvia.[42] The activities of the group were based on the firm belief that Nazi Germany would lose the war and that the USA and Great Britain would decide the fate of the nations. The group planned to inform Latvian ambassadors abroad and the governments of Western countries about the aims and actions of the Soviets and Nazis carried out in Latvia and the other Baltic states during the occupation.[43] In February 1943 Leonids Siliņš, a participant in the resistance movement since 1940, attempted to go to Sweden with information about both occupation periods in Latvia, but failed and was arrested with his brother, Voldemars Siliņš, in Ventspils.[44] However, on 22 July 1943 Leonids Siliņš arrived in Gottland (Sweden). He had a collection of newspapers, copies of laws and orders, photographs and originals or copies of documents that reflected life in occupied Latvia during both the Nazi and Soviet occupations. Those materials were passed on to the Latvian ambassadors and interested institutions.[45]

In February 1942 the Latvian Social Democratic Labour Party (LSDLP) renewed its illegal action. Dr Pauls Kalniņš (former chairman of the presidium of the fourth Saeima), the former deputy of the Saeima, Bruno Kalninš, and Felikss Cielēns, Voldemars Bastjanis, Karlis Lorencs and Fricis Menders were active in it.[46] Cielēns wrote in his memoirs that there was one person, Bruno Kalniņš, acting at the centre of the Social Democrats. He enjoyed the trust of them all.[47] He also worked out the resolution "The Situation in Latvia and the Actual Mission of the Latvian People", that was passed by the Central Committee of the LSDLP on 28 July 1943. It stated that the political line taken should be based on democracy and independence, taking into account the defects and errors of the previous democracy, thus requiring the restoration of an independent and democratic republic, the constitution of which would be determined by a democratically elected Saeima, but previous to that the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia of 1922 would be the basis for the government of the country.[48] The LSDLP had contacts with Social Democrats in Estonia, Lithuania, Finland and Sweden. In the spring of 1943 information about the situation in Latvia was delivered to the Finnish Social Democrats with the help of one of their members.[49]

The first contacts were established between the social democrats and the democratic bloc. Čakste and Bruno Kalniņš, on the instructions of their organisations, agreed to establish a common centre. Besides the Democratic Centre Party, the LSDLP and the two other largest Latvian political parties, the Party of Christian Farmers and Catholics of Latgale, and the Farmers' Union, were to take part.[50] On 13 August 1943 a joint meeting was held where representatives of the four largest Latvian parties met for the first time: Čakste, representative of the Democratic Centre party; Kalniņš of the LSDLP; Bishop Jazeps Rancans of the Party of Christian Farmers and Catholics of Latgale; and Adolfs Klive of the Farmers' Union. The Latvian Central Council (LCC) was founded. In the election in the autumn of 1941 the four parties gained 443,703 votes and won 49 mandates to the Saeima.[51] There were also some representatives of smaller parties and groups in the LCC,[52] which could reasonably speak for all the Latvian people. The formation and activities of the LCC have been given a wide and detailed description in *The Latvian Central Council* by Edgars Andersons and Leonids Siliņš.

The political platform of the LCC stated that the Latvian people would accept no dependence on Germany or the USSR; that the Republic of Latvia continued to exist de jure under international and constitutional law; that it must also regain its full independence de facto; that the Latvian state would be based on the principles of freedom and democracy, with the shortcomings and mistakes of the past corrected. The principal demand of the people was the re-establishment of the independent and democratic Republic of Latvia. The activities of the LCC were based on the strong belief that Great Britain and the USA would protect the rights of Latvia.[53]

It was planned for the LCC to have two sections: the presidium of the last Saeima as a link with the former independent, democratic Latvia in the extended presidium, with Pauls Kalniņš as its chairman, and vice chairmen Karlis Pauļuks and Jazeps Rancans. Four people were elected to the second section: the chairman, Čakste; vice chairman, Kalniņš; Klive; and Rancans. Ludvigs Seja was elected general secretary.[54]

As Klive wrote in his memoirs, under the political conditions between 1941 and 1945, when war was being waged in Latvia by the Soviet Union and Germany in their own interests, the resistance had to state continuously and repeatedly that Latvia was still de jure an independent country occupied by

the Soviet Union in 1940 and by Germany in 1941.[55] An impression had to be made on other countries that the Latvians were willing to restore the independent, democratic Republic of Latvia and did not support the policy of the occupying powers.

The LCC organised seven commissions. The Foreign Commission made regular reports, which were sent to the ambassadors and LCC delegations abroad. The commission also had occasional contacts with the centres and movements of the resistance in Estonia and Lithuania. Joint conferences of the heads of the resistance movements of all three Baltic states were held. These conferences worked out and passed memorandums and declarations accusing both invaders, to be passed on to the governments of Western countries.[56]

The Military Commission was one of the most active commissions, led from the start by General Janis Kurelis (1882–1954). The head of staff was Captain Kristaps Upelnieks (1891–1944), the soul of all the military resistance movement. In 1944, acting in the name of General Kurelis, he gathered thousands of soldiers in Kurzeme to continue the struggle for a free, independent Latvia. The commission had contacts in the Latvian legion and the Aizsargi organisation. Many Latvian officers worked with it, especially Colonel Vilis Janums, who worked out plans to arm the whole Latvian division. It was expected that arms would be delivered from Western countries and Sweden.[57]

The Juridical Commission discussed suggestions for changes in the constitution and election law.[58] It collected laws and orders issued by the occupying powers, and produced summaries of the situation which were delivered to Ambassador Voldemars Salnais in Stockholm.[59]

The Economic Commission discussed the problems the economy of a restored Latvia might face.[60]

The Information Commission tried to deliver accurate information about the situation in Latvia to the diplomatic representatives of Latvia, who passed it on to the governments of the countries they were accredited to. This was very important because the communists and the National Socialists continued campaigns against the independence of the Baltic states to discredit them in Western and neutral countries.[61] The materials were put to good use by the ambassador to the USA, Alfreds Bilmanis. He passed the declaration and platform of the LCC to the State Department, thus undermining the propaganda put out by Moscow describing Latvians as either communists or Nazis who

had forgotten about independent Latvia. The information passed on by the LCC was given special attention in Switzerland, where Miķelis Valters (the former ambassador to Brussels) published the two abovementioned documents and many articles related to them in the magazine *Latvju Domas*, of which he was the publisher. The Foreign Office in Great Britain was introduced to the activities of the LCC. There were some articles in the Swedish press, but they were reserved.[62] A very important document was the memorandum passed by the LCC that made the LCC's view of the mission of the Latvian people and the situation in Latvia clear to the inhabitants of Latvia and to foreign governments.[63] Dated February 1944, it was sent to the governments of Western countries and many different organisations, and to the press, by the ambassador of Latvia in Washington, Bilmanis.[64]

The Collective Resources Commission and the Commission for Keeping Contacts were involved in evacuation work on the coast of the Kurzeme region. They also managed to maintain radio contact with Sweden. One of the main people in organising the evacuation was a civil engineer, Arturs Arnitis (1909–1986).[65] He organised the first visit by Leonids Siliņš to Gottland on 22 July 1943. He also organised a resistance group among workers at the port in Ventspils, which was later named the Ventspils Contact Group.[66] With boats provided by the LCC, 2,141 people were taken to Sweden between January 1944 and the summer of 1945. This number may be wrong because in many cases children under 16 were not mentioned, and it is possible that refugees carried by private boats had also been included on the lists. The number of Latvians who reached Sweden came to 4,559 on 17 May 1945.[67]

It was decided that the preparation of a political manifesto, signed by former ministers and deputies, writers, academics, senior clergy of all the religions, court officials and other famous people would give the LCC greater authority. The text of the manifesto was prepared by a Social Democrat, Feliks Cielēns, a professor at the Latvian Academy of Agriculture, Andrejs Teikmanis, Vilis Eihe, also of the academy and a colleague of his.[68] The memorandum was to be passed to the governments of Western countries, but only the LCC knew about it. Officially, it was addressed to the general inspector of the Latvian SS Voluntary Legion, Rudolfs Bangerskis, so that it would have an official reason to gather the signatures. The content of the memorandum was political, and

it stressed the fact that, according to international law, the Republic of Latvia was considered as existing de jure. It was directed against the activities of the Nazi authorities, including the illegal conscription of soldiers into the legion.[69] They collected 190 signatures.[70] Bangerskis was familiar with the contents of the memorandum, but he refused to follow it. However, the Nazis learned about it and knew the names of those who had signed it.[71] The minister for the occupied Eastern regions, Alfred Rosenberg, planned to dismiss them and leave them in the hands of the communists.[72]

In April 1944, the LCC members were arrested, together with the leader, Čakste. At the beginning he was sent to the central prison in Riga; but later on he was moved to the concentration camp in Stutthof, where he died in January 1945. After the arrest of Čakste, Bruno Kalniņš took over the leadership of the LCC. After his arrest on 12 July 1944 the leadership was assumed by General Verners Tepfers (during the Nazi occupation he was the head of the Monuments Board). The last meeting of the LCC in Latvia was held in Riga on 8 September 1944. At this meeting Pauls Kalniņš, as the executive president of Latvia and the chairman of the Saeima, signed the declaration on the restoration of independent Latvia. It announced that the people of Latvia had taken over sovereignty in the territory liberated from the foreign power and had restored the Republic of Latvia as a sovereign state. The next day Pauls Kalnins went into exile.[73] The LCC was founded as a provisional government. Thanks to its actions, especially in providing information, it made known outside Latvia the endeavours of the Latvians to restore their independent, democratic country.

CHAPTER 4. THE KURELIS GROUP (JULY 1944 – MAY 1944)

In July 1944, a group was formed by General Janis Kurelis in Skrīveri. Its official name was the General Kurelis Aizsargi Group in Riga. The highest-ranking SS and police leader in Ostland, General Fridrichs Jeckeln, issued an order to form battalions in Riga (550 strong), Skrīveri (250), Sloka (300) and in Dole (120). The Aizsargi leader, Lieutenant Colonel Augusts Dzenitis, passed the order to Janis Veide, the commander of the 5th Aizsargi Regiment in Riga.[74] Veide wrote in his memoirs that, on the initiative of Kristaps Upelnieks, he had given the Aizsargi living within the limits of the 3rd and 4th police districts to Kurelis' leadership.[75]

Professor Haralds Biezais has researched the Kurelis group in documents in archives in Germany and the USA.[76] He came to the conclusion that the Kurelis group was formed on the Latvians' own initiative, with the aim of protecting farmers from plunder and violence by the retreating German army. On the other hand, the core of the group had also planned to act as partisans after the Soviet occupation. The Kurelis group was made legal by Jeckeln, who ordered the Aizsargi to organise the general management of home affairs under the leadership of Veide, who, on his initiative, appointed General Kurelis as the head of the group, with the Aizsargi living within the limits of two police districts under him.[77]

After moving to Kurzeme, the Kurelis group settled in the former Anahite glass factory in the pagasts of Puze, about 12 kilometres from Usma railway station, in the district of Ventspils. Deserters from the Latvian legion sought refuge with the Kurelis group. Desertions had increased especially after the forced withdrawal of the remains of the 15th Division of the Latvian Legion, the 1st and 2nd Police Regiments and others to Germany. Many enlisted men went over to the Kurelis group, which helped the LCC to organise the evacuation of refugees and kept up radio contact with Sweden.[78] The group had pledged allegiance to Latvia and the Latvian constitution, not to Hitler and Germany.[79] They waited for a situation in the final stages of the war when it would be necessary to rally all the Latvian forces to restore the independence of Latvia. The Nazis knew the group's stand, and that is why it was liquidated. On 14 November 1944, the command and all the units around it were taken unawares, disarmed and arrested. The officers were sentenced: eight of them, Captain Upelnieks among them, were shot in Liepaja on November 20; three were sent to the concentration camp in Stutthof. General Kurelis was discharged and sent to Germany. Officially, Jeckeln explained that Kurelis did not know or understand anything about what was happening in his group, but in fact Jeckeln was afraid to shoot Kurelis because he would have had to deal with the reaction of the soldiers and the people. Kurelis' name became a symbol of freedom.

Lieutenant Rubenis' battalion was the only one to get away from the siege, but during the 5–9 December struggles with Nazi units it was destroyed. Those of Kurelis' group who had escaped arrest, went to the forests where they stayed until the end of the war: some joined the 19th Latvian Division,

some the communist partisans, others found asylum in the SS-Jagdverband Ostland group. The Nazis estimated the number dispersed into the forests at about 400,[80] but it was being supplemented all the time with new deserters. The Kurelis group had become so popular that different groups of freedom fighters used the name up to the end of the war. In February 1945, it was mentioned in an LCC radio report that "the number of partisans is estimated at about 2,000 men."[81]

General Kurelis' group, which had been formed as a military opposition to the Nazi regime, was the basis for further military resistance even after its liquidation. For instance, after its liquidation, a new illegal resistance group called the Riflemen of Viesturs was created. It consisted mainly of former Kurelians, some of whom had acquired identity cards. They were able to stay behind the front line as civilians; some were involved in different services, most of them stayed in the forests.[82] Other partisan groups, which went on fighting even after the capitulation of Germany, were also formed.

CHAPTER 5. THE ILLEGAL NEWSPAPERS, LEAFLETS AND PROCLAMATIONS

One of the forms of resistance was the publication of illegal fliers and proclamations. After the celebrations of independence on 18 November 1941, leaflets saying "Down with the German Yoke!" and "Long Live Free Latvia!" were found near the Monument to Freedom.[83] In a report by the security police and SD commander, it was also mentioned that similar proclamations had been found in Virgene, in the district of Liepaja.[84]

One of the most important illegal newspapers was *Tautas Balss*, published by the Latvian Nationalist Union (LNU). The founding meeting was held on 10 November 1941[85] (other sources say it was on 18 November).[86] The editor of *Tautas Balss* was Arturs Kaminskis.[87] The restoration of a free, independent country based on national democratic principles was planned in the political programme of the LNU. The LNU would represent the will and interests of the united people of Latvia.[88] The main activity of the LNU was publishing the newspaper *Tautas Balss*, as its editor, Kaminskis, said: "Because we came to the conclusion that we can struggle against the invaders, whether it be Russia or Germany, only if we keep up the national consciousness of the people with the help of a newspaper."[89] The first issue of *Tautas Balss* was pub-

lished on 15 February 1942.[90] The newspaper was distributed mainly in Riga[91] but it was also delivered to Jelgava, Ventspils, Daugavpils, Liepaja, Valmiera and Dobele, from where it was forwarded by contacts.[92] It exposed Nazi plans. Most articles showed the similarities between the Nazis and the communists, and took a stand against joining the the State Service, the voluntary police units and labour in Germany. They urged people to disobey Nazi instructions, which were against the interests of the people, warned against contacts with the communist underground, published material from Himmler's *Das schwarz Korps*, gave an overview and translations of BBC news.

(Between November 1942 and April 1943, 102 people were arrested and 73 were detained.)[93]

In the summer of 1943, disappointed with German politics, Gustavs Celmiņš, who had intended to carry out his plans to subvert the democratic system in Latvia and to establish a dictatorship with himself as the leader with the help of the Nazis during the Second World War,[94] started to publish illegally *Vestijums*, later renamed *Latvju Raksti Brivā Latvija.*[95] All in all, there were 14 numbers of about 2,000 copies; some of them had up to 16 pages.[96] Feliks Cielens wrote about this newspaper in his memoirs: "The German plans to conquer Latvia were publicised, as was the demand for independence"; but at the same time he stressed that that "demand did not say anything concrete, because it did not say anything about the constitution."[97]

There was also the illegal Latvijas Vanagu Organisācija (The Organisation of Latvian Hawks), the former Melnais Vanags (Black Hawk).[98] Its aim was to free Latvia and to restore independence. It was engaged in the distribution of leaflets to young people, and collected guns. Most members of the group were young: the majority of official members were under 20. In a report by the security police and SD commander in Latvia, Rudolfs Lange, it was described as not important, not able to organise any serious action.[100]

At the beginning of April 1942, an illegal youth organisation called Jaunpulki (New Regiment) was founded. The founder and leader was Martins Jansons, a journalist by profession. He recruited about 50 young people aged between 15 and 18. His organisation was involved in the distribution of leaflets against the Nazis. The text of the leaflets was written by Jansons himself. The actions of Jaunpulks were based on the assumption that the Baltic states would get back their independence after the collapse of Germany.[101] Their proclama-

tions urged people not to believe Nazi promises, not to cooperate with them and to be ready to fight for a free Latvia for Latvians. They held the opinion that the Nazis planned to destroy the Latvian nation, that they wanted to use Latvian youth as a cheap labour force and cannon fodder.[102] The group did not exist for long: seven leading members of the organisation, including Jansons, were arrested in June 1942.[103]

Other illegal publications were the bulletin of the technical section of the Forest Department, *Talavas Tauretajs*,[104] and *Daugavas Vanagi* (Hawks of the Daugava) published by the organisation Daugavas Vanagi, which aimed at arousing national consciousness.[105]

The resistance groups, whose main activity was distributing different proclamations, leaflets and other material with the aim of informing the citizens about the real situation, preserving national consciousness and creating a spirit of resistance against the invaders, were all destroyed. They acted on their own with no common centre. They were directed against both the communist and the Nazi occupations, and aimed at the restoration of independent Latvia. The distribution of illegal material gave people access to different information from what they were given officially by the Nazis. That was how the Latvians prepared for further resistance.

CONCLUSION

The resistance movement, which expressed itself firstly as a struggle by the partisans, followed by the publishing of anti-Nazi materials by illegal groups and the establishing of the LCC (a link to a previous democratic Latvia) by the former political party and leaders of independent Latvia, did not manage to achieve its aim – to restore the independence of Latvia – in the political situation when the two great powers, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, had a claim on the territory of Latvia.

The significance of the resistance movement first and foremost is the fact that it provided information both in Latvia and abroad.

During the whole period of the Nazi occupation, until the end, the members of the resistance movement waited for an appropriate situation for the restoration of independence and expected the support of Western countries, but the hopes of a small country like Latvia were of no importance to the large Western democracies under those particular historical conditions.

1 H. Strods, *Zem melnbruna zobena: Vacijas politika Latvija 1939.–1945.*, pp. 41-42; Ž. Unāms, *Karogs vējā. Cina.* 16 August 1990

2 H. Strods, op cit. p. 45.; Ž. Unāms *Cina.* 16 August 1990.; *Latvijas suverenitates ideja liktengriežos. Vacijas okupacijas laika dokumenti, 1941.–1945.* Compiled by V. Samsons. Riga, Zinatne 1990, pp. 33-34

3 H. Biezais, *Latvija kāškrusta varā. Sveši kungi pašu ļaudis.* B. v., Gauja, 1992, pp. 61-63

4 Ž. Unāms, *Cina.* 16 August 1990

5 H. Strods, op cit; H. Biezais, *Latviešu tautas iznīcinašanas plāni. Latvijas vēstures institūta žurnāls.* 1992 No. 2, pp. 139-150

6 *Tēvija.* 2 July 1941

7 Appendix to the report by the Abwehr department in Ostland, 23 October 1941. *Latvijas suverenitātes ideja liktenģriežos*, pp. 41-42

8 *Latvijas suverenitātes ideja liktenģriežos*, p. 74

9 *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā: Dokumentu un atmiņu krājums.* / Ed. O. Freivalds, vol. 1.: No 1939. gada septembra līdz 1941. gada junijam. – Vasteras, Daugavas vanagu centralais izdevums, 1970; V.A. Hazners, *Varmacibas torni: Atminas.* Linkolna, 1977

10 A. Silgailis, *Latviešu leģions: Dibināšana, formēšana, kauju gaitas Otrā pasaules kara laikā.* Copenhagen 1964

11 A. Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia 1941.–1944.* Rīga, Historical Institute of Latvia, 1996

12 H. Biezais, *Latvija kāškrusta varā.; Nacionālie partizāni. Kara invalids.* 1984 No 29, pp. 12-22

13 J. Ozols, *Latviešu nacionālā pretestības kustība 1940.–1945. Kara invalids.* 1983 No 28, pp. 27-42.; *Piezīmes par latviešu nacionālo pretestības kustību 1940.–1945. Kara invalids.* 1984 No 29, pp. 23-25.; *Latviešu politiskais noskaņojums. Kara invalids.* 1987 No 33, pp. 17-25

14 Ē. Pārups, *Pretestības kurtība vācu okupācijas laikā. Jaunā Gaita.* 1987 No 2, pp. 40-44; *Pretestības kustība. Jaunā Gaita.* 1984 No 5, pp. 48-51

15 H. Biezais, *Latvija kāškrusta varā.* p. 188

16 H. Biezais, *Kara invalids.* 1985 No 30, pp. 21-22

17 H. Biezais, *Kara invalids.* 1984 No 29, p. 12

18 A. Silgailis, *Latviešu leģionā. Manas atmiņas par pulkvedi Aleksandru Plensnersu. Pulkvedis Aleksandrs Plensnerss: rakstu kopojums pulkveža piemiņai.* Edited by O. Irbe. ASV, 1987, p. 144

19 H. Biezais, *Kara invalids.* 1984 No 29, p. 14

20 H. Biezais, *Latvija kāškrusta varā.* p. 189; A. Silgailis, *Latviešu leģionā: Manas atmiņas par pulkvedi Aleksandru Plensnersu.* p. 108

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The Latvian Partisan War between 1944 and 1956

HEINRIHS STRODS

Research into the history of the Latvian partisan war is in its early stages. There has been no specific research except for several collections of partisans' memoirs and a few articles, and the monograph published in 1996 of which this work can be considered to be a summary.[1] So far there have been 16 publications in Latvia and abroad which we have tried to take into account here. In 1999 the second part of the book *Documents and Material* was published in Riga, with an index of names for both volumes and annotations in English. Both of these books are based on the material on especially dangerous anti-Soviet criminals in the Latvia State Archive (LVA), Repository 1986 (of the former LSSR KGB) No 31504 of description I and Case No 21108 of II description. Material at the archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the LSSR NKVD (kept at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Latvia), the archives of the Central Committee of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party of Latvia (LKPA) Repository No 101, LVA), special reports of the LSSR NKVD (KGB) to the government by the LSSR (No 270 of LVA) and other material has also been used.

The Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv (Freiburg, Germany), ten repositories of the Voenno-istoričeskij archiv Rossiskoij Federaciji (Russian Federation Archive of War History) in Moscow and material from the Archives of the Central Committee of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party of the USSR (now Rossiskij centr chranenija i izučenija dokumentov noveišeij istorii) Repository No 600 have also been researched. This paper is an attempt to summarise this material for readers who are interested in the Latvian partisan war between 1944 and 1956.

In the 20th century independent Latvia has been invaded by the Red Army three times – in 1919, 1940 and 1944. Each of these invasions was followed by a partisan war. The longest and the most determined followed the third invasion, in 1944, and lasted for almost a third of the 47 years of the occupation. As the occupation after the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was illegal and the LSSR state was not internationally recognised, the partisan war against the in-

vaders was therefore legal. The armed resistance movement against the Soviet regime was a spontaneous reaction by the people, when no forms of open combat were possible any more. The first motivating factor was patriotism, because the aim of all the partisan organisations and their supporters was to create a free and independent Republic of Latvia. The second was fear of the institutions of the Soviet regime, and the Red Army and its *istrebitelyi* (reprisal squads). The third was the violation of civil rights – the ban on democracy, holding property and freedom of religion. Soviet propaganda was a very effective means of turning the anti-Soviet mood into armed resistance. Civil rights not only permit but also oblige citizens to fight for democracy against the power that denies or restricts democracy and freedom of religion. A resistance movement is included among the rights of a nation (*ius resistendi*) based on international and civil rights and was the last means in the struggle against Soviet power. The resistance movement in Latvia included a wide spectrum of organised and separate public forces. They can be divided into armed and nonviolent resistance movements, which were closely related to each other during the first decades of the occupation. The resistance movement in Latvia became part of the resistance against the whole Soviet Union in the Baltic states, western Belarus and western Ukraine. By their attitude towards the Soviet regime from 1944 to 1960, Latvians can be divided into three main types.

The first group consisted of the armed resistance (approximately 20,000 men) who, together with active supporters (about 100,000 people), fought against the regime. The power of the resistance movement was weakened by mass emigration from 1943 to 1945 (about 280,000 people).

The second group was the silent majority that did their jobs, obeyed the instructions of the authorities and, as they said, did not interfere in politics. Still, through its work and attitude, this group, in principle, supported "compartocracy".

The third group consisted of collaborators – leaders of the Communist Party and Communist Youth, the reprisal squads, the police, the secret services (particularly the NKVD and later the NKGB) and various activists who openly or secretly supported the regime. This group contained most of the members of the Communist Party (102,000 in 1964) as well as non-members (approximately the same number). There were about 300,000 people in this group, half of whom were immigrants from other parts of the Soviet Union.

The activities of the partisans were based on the existence of 20,000 armed men, patriots who wanted to fight the communist power. The first potential contingents of partisans were formed during the Nazi occupation. They were, originally, mostly untrained youths who had avoided being drafted into the Latvian division of the German army, or deserters from the Latvian army. They could not fight in the German army without a guarantee that Germany would grant Latvia independence after the war. The number of these groups grew at the end of 1943, during 1944 and in the first half of 1945, while the illegal mobilisation into the German and, in 1944 and 1945, the Red armies increased (violating the 1911 Hague Convention). This group contained people who did not recognise the communist power, who had served in institutions of either independent Latvia or during the Nazi occupation, who possessed property or whose relatives had been exiled to the USSR.

The organisation of Latvian partisans started with the banned Latvian Central Council in 1943. It consisted of members of the Saeima (the parliament) dissolved in 1934 and representatives of all the governing political parties. This council was regarded as the provisional government for a future independent Latvia.[2] The Military Commission of the council, under the guidance of General Janis Kurelis and the chief of staff, Captain Kristaps Upelnieks, in 1944 rallied several thousand Latvian soldiers to continue to fight for a free and independent Latvia.[3] Later about 400 men from General Kurelis' army, defeated by the Nazis, joined the partisans and laid the foundations for the armed resistance during the second communist occupation.

The secret counterintelligence service of the German army also organised the resistance, preparing soldiers to fight behind the front line. It organised combat squads, tried to get them across the front line and to the rear of the Red Army.[4] These "wild cats" (Waldkatzen) were specially trained to fight in the rear. Up to the surrender on 9 May 1944, these squads were part of the German army, but after the surrender, under the guidance of the Jagdverband chief of staff, Captain Boriss Jankavs, they joined the partisans. In the spring of 1945 there were 462 members in the "Jagdkommands" of Kurland. Several of them (P. Supe, J. Pormals, A. Feldbergs, etc.) became commanders or fighters in partisan squads.

With the Soviet army in Latvia forming groups for the struggle against the "rotten West", with immigrants loyal to it and the USSR, and with some

Latvians' support for the invaders, any restriction of the power of the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee (LCP CC) was out of the question. The conclusion of the politically active part of the nation was clear: either the Soviet dictatorship would replace the democratic state of Latvia, depriving the people of democratic freedom and their property, or else that power should be destroyed. There was no third option. In 1944 and 1945 the four largest unions of partisans were formed with leaders, divisions, regiments and companies, staff, suppliers and informers. In eastern Latvia there was the Latvian Homeland Guards Union (LTSA) led by the dean of the Vanagu Roman Catholic church, Antons Juhnēvičs; in northern Latvia the Latvian National Partisan Union (LNPA) led by K. Rusovs, A. Circenis and P. Supe; in northern Kurland the Organisation of Latvian National Partisans led by B. Jankavs and I. Feldbergs; in southern Kurland, Tēvijas Vanagi (Hawks of the Fatherland). All the unions and organisations of partisans acted in accordance with accepted statutes; most of the partisans had pledged allegiance and acted in compliance with the statutes. The Latvian partisan war between 1944 and 1956 was not led or supported by any foreign force.

The fight against the partisans was led by the LCP CC, which was completely dependent on the PSKP CC which financed and commanded the LCP, appointed its leaders, appropriated the legal and economic systems of the occupied states and their governments. Still, the LCP CC remained the supreme power in Soviet Latvia. The suppression of the partisans was led by the VK(B)P (PSKP) CC and LC(B)P (LCP) CC, but the Red Army was the executive power. From 1945 officials in the LCP CC in Riga were in charge of the struggle against the partisans. It included the secretary of the LCP CC, Commander Titovs, People's Commissar of the LSSR NKGB A. Noviks, People's Commissar of the LSSR NKVD A. Eglītis, the commander of the 5th Commissions Division of the Internal Forces of the USSR NKVD, P. Leontjevs, the commander of the Baltic region of forces of the USSR NKVD Lieutenant General Golovka, and the section chief of the LCP CC, Colonel E. Krūmiņš. The people in charge of the struggle against the partisans in each region and town were directed by the first secretaries of the Communist Party committees. These included chairmen of the executive committees, chiefs of the NKVD and NKGB of regions and towns, chiefs of the reprisal squads, prosecutors in regions and towns. The struggle against the armed underground organisa-

tions included the 5th Commissions Division of the USSR NKVD (KGB), which usually comprised four regiments – No 24, 36, 143, 260; Regiment No 182 of the railway guards of the USSR NKVD (KGB); Regiment No 48 of the escort forces of the USSR NKVD (KGB); and Battalion No 21 of the LSSR NKVD (KGB), together with activists in the CP. Thus there were about 15 regiments fighting against the Latvian partisans until 1949.[5]

Due to a lack of information it is not easy to ascertain what the participation of the Red Army and its rear in the struggle against the partisans was. It is clear that in 1945 regular units of the Red Army, including the Latvian Riflemen's Division No 43, not only combed the woods but also carried out operations against the partisans. The abovementioned divisions, together with the Baltic Region Staff of the USSR NKVD under the guidance of Golovka, were based in Riga. Apart from this, there was also a special group of 110 men fighting against the partisans; later about ten such groups, containing 80 men each and disguised as partisans, infiltrated the partisan organisations.[6]

The main armed antipartisan forces were the internal forces of the USSR NKVD. These forces and their activities had several features. First, according to reports by the USSR NKVD, there were no Latvians, Lithuanians or Estonians. Secondly, they were equipped with good firearms, including guns with silencers. They had mortars, tanks, radio transmitters and dogs. Thirdly, in order to achieve superiority, the USSR NKVD often transferred regiments from one republic to another. Fourthly, they consisted of people loyal to the regime, half of whom were members of either the Communist Party or the Young Communist League. Fifthly, they were top secret and acted independently of each other. Even the training of the reprisal squads could not be conducted in the places where they were stationed. These forces, as a whole, as well as each regiment, had their own intelligence service, working parallel with the services of the NKVD and MVD.

The Latvian partisan war between 1944 and 1956 can be divided into three periods. The first lasted from July 1944 till July 1946 and can be seen as the time of the great partisan unions. In July 1944, in the Abrene district, the first attacks began on Regiment No 24 of the 5th Commissions Division. The establishment of partisan organisations began. The formation of the LNPA in Vidzeme and the LTSA was complete by the beginning of 1945. About 20,000 partisans participated in the movement at the time, 10,000 of whom were

organised under rules, oaths of allegiance and written instructions. They launched military strikes and built bunkers in the woods (about 30 bunkers in the Stampaki Moor). The LTSA formed four divisions (three of them in action) across the regions of Latgale, Vidzeme, Kurzeme and Zemgale as well as regiments in districts and companies in villages. For a period the partisans controlled the situation in several districts (Ilūkste, Daugavpils and Valmiera), but the KGB signed cease-fire agreements in separate villages with them. However, the Red Army could not break the resistance.

The second period lasted from 1946 to 1948. At the beginning, as a result of instructions from and a visit by General Ivan Serov of the NKVD of the USSR (1905–1990), following the example of the antipartisan war in the German Democratic Republic, the methods used against the partisans were changed. The 5th Commissions Division, including four regiments (No 24, 36, 143, 260) and 5,000 soldiers, made up part of battalion No 21 of the USSR NKVD-KGB, comprising in all about 15,000 soldiers, with town and district units of the NKVD-KGB and Soviet companies of the Communist Party. The intelligence service of the LSSR NKVD-KGB and internal forces worked separately, but the information went to the districts and towns for operation planning. The antipartisan staff worked under the guidance of the secretary of the LCP CC. Beginning in 1945, activists of the Communist Party in Latvia began to carry firearms. Following the example of the LCP CC in 1945 (110 fighters), there were partisan teams (about 80 men) formed in the districts that began to fight the partisans, sometimes pretending to be English or Swedish agents. The Soviets changed their methods, based on coordination and the consolidation of scattered forces. They succeeded in concentrating in separate regions forces that were ten times superior to the partisans, thus making partisan victory impossible. Most of the partisans were not specially trained, they lacked weapons and ammunition, their living conditions were poor, there was neither coordination nor common leadership. Some drank, which undermined their authority. During this period the largest groups were scattered, they often changed their position and began to make use of more "partisan-like" methods against the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the KGB, party and Komsomol organisers and red agents.

The third period of the war lasted from 1949 to 1953. With the deportation of 43,000 people to Siberia on 25 March 1949, there were no sources of

supply and information left for many partisan units. The number of organised partisans decreased and they were forced to move from one place to another more and more often. Although their numbers increased after 25 March 1949, with several hundred men who had avoided persecution, the number of active partisans declined. This period could be described as a period of withdrawal and legalisation of the partisans.

The fourth period, between 1953 and 1956, was a time of several separate partisan groups. According to instruction No 002 passed on 24 January 1953 by the USSR KGB "On the Abolition of the Nationalist Underground and its Armed Gangs in the Western Regions of Ukraine and Belarus and in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia", the LCP CC and LSSR KGB tried to prove that the "gangs" had been liquidated thanks to their efforts. However, it would be a mistake to consider these accounts to be the end of the partisan war. In 1954, as the LSSR KGB itself believed, there were still more than a hundred partisans in Latvia. Thus the government of Soviet Latvia had not carried out the order of the USSR CC and the USSR KGB for the elimination of the partisan movement.

The partisans had 1,572 encounters with the armed forces and authorities in 47 administrative districts of Latvia between 1944 and 1950.[7] They fought very courageously, as was noted in a report by the KGB, "with the despair of people doomed to death," often keeping the last bullet or hand grenade for themselves.

A considerable contribution to the suppression of the partisan movement was made by NKVD-KGB agents who were devoted communists (between 1941 and 1944, about 800 people). They were supplemented by a new agency from 1944 to 1953. This was recruited mainly on the grounds of compromising material (position during the period of bourgeois Latvia or the Nazi occupation, "wrong" social descent, participation in bourgeois organisations, connections with the underground and the partisans – about 2,000 people). Agents and informers were divided into field agents (forest rangers, postmen, milk collectors, etc.) and agents of influence (journalists, lecturers, teachers, etc.) who imposed the opinions of the KGB on society. The other group consisted of agents and informers answering directly to the KGB, to which agents in prisons belonged (they spied on the arrested) and assault agents (disguised as partisans, they committed violent acts in the name of the partisans or even attacked them). This group also included the owners of apartments and secret addresses for meetings. The KGB agents were divided according to rank into residents, agents and in-

formers. The agents and informers reported to a resident, carried out his instructions and communicated to him the results. Agents performed the more complicated tasks. Informers were denouncers of the lowest rank, who reported to agents on any anti-communist activity observed in their area.

Latvian partisans fought simultaneously on three fronts. The first was the internal armed forces of the USSR NKVD (which contained up to 5,000 men), battalions (about 18,000 men) and companies of district and city committees. The second armed front were the approximately 80 groups of special fighters organised by the LSSR NKVD. On instructions from the KGB, they disguised themselves as partisans; they often infiltrated the partisans under the names of well-known officers. The third front, in accordance with a resolution of the LKP CC passed in 1945, were the active members of the Communist Party of towns and rural areas. They were armed with rifles and sometimes with carbines. Some policemen also belonged to this group.

Unlike the Soviets, who in 1943 and 1944 made about eight lists of the politically suspected, enumerating several hundred people in Latgale to send to the USSR NKVD (KGB) and who arrested those whose names were on the lists in order to deport them to Russia or killed their opponents on the spot, the partisans did not make up lists of politically dangerous people. According to sentences passed at trial (e.g., by the Fatherland Hawks) after the arrest and interrogation of active leaders of the CP, Soviet functionaries and members of the KGB were shot on the spot, especially during battles.

While in 1944 and 1947 the Latvian partisans were frequently involved in offensive assaults on the enemy and their supporters (Stampaki Moor in 1945), between 1948 and 1953 they gradually turned to a defensive struggle. Through encirclement operations the USSR NKVD (KGB) under the guidance of the KGB of Latvia, concentrating the Red Army's forces which were numerically ten times superior to the partisans, managed to suppress the movement in parts. In 1954, when the number of active partisans did not exceed a few hundred, a period of retaliation started. Small groups fought against the USSR KGB forces and the infiltrated partisans. This period ended in 1956, when the partisan movement was almost defeated. Several underground resistance groups were connected with the partisans. Their members were either students or workers. The largest were those of Kursa and Lāčplēsis. The largest partisan youth organisation was the Young Hawks, which operated in eastern Latvia. Other or-

ganisations of adults and young people connected with the partisans were local and unrelated. For example, under the guidance of a pupil of Alūksne secondary school, Līvija Eglīte, a group of 13 young people published a handwritten magazine called *Kokle*. This group had connections with the partisan group led by Rederss.[8] Apart from having the same political goal, the restoration of independent Latvia, these groups supported the partisans in everyday life, distributed their illegal publications and communicated information about the arrival of USSR NKVD troops or their planned actions. Some of these groups later became part of the nonviolent resistance movement.

The ideological opposition was led by the information departments at the headquarters of the partisans or by members of special divisions. In 1945 and 1946 the partisans published approximately ten publications, 400 to 500 copies monthly. Secondly, they published several hundred leaflets and proclamations. These were printed on primitive printing appliances, on typewriters or were handwritten. Thirdly, the partisans put up messages in public places where people used to gather (village centres, windmills, milk collection points, schools, etc.).

The publications and leaflets were devoted to current issues in Latvia: the celebration of Independence Day on November 18, Lāčplēša Day on November 11 (a day devoted to Latvian soldiers), and so on. The publications also dealt with the instructions of the Communist Party relating to agriculture, politics and culture. Single-party and single-candidate elections were widely covered, as well as the immoral lifestyle of the leaders of the Communist Party and the red terror. These publications also gave lists of KGB agents, criticised the conditions of the peasants and their compulsory membership of collective farms. Another aim was to acquaint the Latvian people with events abroad, especially those relating to Latvia (the Potsdam Conference, the Paris Peace Conference, speeches of US presidents, etc.). Most of the material came from foreign radio stations (Table 1, next page).

During the abovementioned 1,572 confrontations (records from 1944 to 1950), as well as during the rest of the armed conflict, including ambushes, about 2,500 partisans were killed. In the post-war period, 498 partisans were held in the central prison in Riga. Eventually more than 3,000 were killed. There were as many people killed as in the War of Independence between 1918 and 1920. All this shows that the partisan war, supported by the whole nation, was less costly in terms of casualties than a conventional war.

Table 1

Main Underground Periodicals of the Latvian Partisans from 1945 to 1948

No	Name	Publisher, Place of publishing	
1.	*Sudrabotā Saule* (Silver Sun)	The Latvian National Partisan Union	Newsletter of the LNPA CV headquarters by K.Rusovs. 1945–1948. 48 issues published in Vidzeme
2.	*Tēvzeme un Brīvība* (Fatherland and Freedom)	LNPA (see 1)	Monthly political publication by K. Rusovs' group. Union for Freedom of the Fatherland in Vidzeme
3.	*Dzimtene* (Fatherland)	LNPA	Handwritten edition by P. Supe (Cinītis), V. Toms and Martuževa in Vidzeme
4.	*Tēvzeme un Brīvība* (Fatherland and Freedom)	LNPO	Publication by the Organisation of Latvian National Partisans by B. Jankavs and Šternbergs
5.	*Kurbads*	LNPO	Publication by the Organisation of Latvian National Partisans by B. Jankavs and Šternbergs
6.	*Mūsu Sauksme* (Our Goal)	LNPO	Publication by the Feldbergs group in Kurzeme
7.	*Tēvzemes Sargs* (Fatherland Guard)	The Latvian Homeland Guards Union (LTSA)	Edited by V. Mundere (M. Skuja) in Latgale
8.	*Vilkaču Sauciens* (The Call of the Werewolves)	LTSA	Edited by J. Pormalis in Selia
9.	*Latgales Partizāns* (The Latgalian Partisan)	Edited by the National Army of Latgale	
10.	*Vanagi* (Hawks)	Hawks of the Fatherland	Edited by J. Roze in southern Kurzeme

According to available data, during the partisan war from 1944 to 1953, 3,243 soldiers of the Red Army were killed (Table 2).

The Latvians and Lithuanians[11] did not adopt the Central European nations' form of resistance. These nations hated the invaders but, despite this, they took up a compliant form of resistance.[12] The Baltic nations fought against the Soviets for 12 years.

The Latvian partisan war between 1944 and 1956 was the longest resistance of a nation against the expansion of communist Russia. First, it proved that military occupation does not mean victory for the invaders, as the partisan movement offered in its turn an organised armed resistance. Secondly, it exposed the blindness of the Western democratic states which not only withheld moral and

Table 2

Killed or Wounded Soviet Soldiers during the Partisan War (July 1944–October 1953)[9]

No.	Category	Killed Number	%	Wounded Number	%	Total
1.	Active members of the Communist Party and Young Communist League, secretaries of the CP, informers (Soviet citizens)	1,070	48.5	281	27.1	1,351
2.	Officials of the NKVD, KGB-KGB	680	30.8	433	40.9	1,113
3.	Officials of the forces of the NKVD, KGB	259	11.7	222	21.5	481
4.	Members of reprisal squads	199[10]	9	109	10.5	308
	Total	2,208	100	1,035	100	3,243

material support in the struggle against the Soviet Union but also forbade the legitimate and authorised ambassadors, R. Zariņš in London and A. Bīlmanis in the USA, to sign the Atlantic Charter in 1941 and to establish a government in exile. Furthermore, during the Yalta Conference in 1943 they gave the Baltic states over to the Soviets. Thirdly, the partisan war in Latvia proved that the partisans fought for an independent, democratic state, for the right of freedom of religion, speech and assembly, but mainly they struggled against communist ideology. Fourthly, the Latvian partisan war proved that the collaborators, with their criminal elements and court system, openly cooperated with the Soviet Union's government agencies – the Central Committee CPDSU and its apparatus. Fifthly, the Soviet occupation proved that the communists of the USSR, in cooperation with the communists of Latvia, for the first time in the history of Latvia tried to destroy this nation, carrying out a form of genocide from which almost a third of the nation suffered, and committed crimes against humanity.

A few mistakes were made during the partisan war. Only a small number of leaders (B. Jankavs, P. Supe, J. Pormalis, etc.) had training in the guidance of partisans and in military action, and a considerable number of troops were not seriously prepared, which resulted in extremely slow and cumbersome operations. The movement was not only amateurish, it also refused to accept a subordinate position to headquarters and to obey its instructions. Secondly, there was a shortage of arms, and quite often the weapons were the personal property of the partisans. There was also a shortage of uniforms, ammunition, medical aid and organised reconnaissance. Thirdly, the leaders lacked reliable

intelligence, they had neither knowledge of the fighting methods of the enemy, nor did they realise the espionage tactics of the enemy by means of KGB agents, special troops and their infiltration of the partisan movement. Fourthly, the resistance movement did not realise that the totalitarian communist regime could be efficient enough to achieve its goals at least for a while. That enabled it to take its time, to ignore damage and casualties. Fifthly, the partisans, being under the influence of the propaganda of foreign radio stations, expected in vain to receive support from the West; consequently, they soon "swallowed the bait" of the "foreign agents" of the KGB who had infiltrated both the partisan settlements and the groups of their supporters. A considerable number of partisans could not believe that, ten years after the Second World War, their foreign allies, who still maintained the idea of an independent Latvia, refused to accept their movement, except when exploiting it for their security agencies. The KGB made use of foreign countries (especially Great Britain) with the assistance of Kim Philby (Operation Lursen-s, etc.).

The deportation of 94,000 people from the Baltic states in 1949 and the suppression of the partisan movement in the Baltic region until 1953 was the Soviet army's direct offensive on its insecure rear before its planned attack on "rotten Western imperialism" which was to take place at the beginning of the 1950s.[13] Further research should be done on whether the partisan war in the Baltic states held off the Soviet army offensive, whether it deflected a direct attack and encouraged the transition to the Cold War.

1 H. Strods, *Latvijas nacionālo partizānu karš 1944.–1956.* Rīga 1996, p. 376

2 *Latvijas Centrālā Padome.* LCP. Upsala 1994. Edited by L. Siliņš

3 H. Biezais, *Kurelieši.* Itaka 1991, p. 136

4 H. Strods, *Latvijas nacionālo partizānu karš 1944.–1956.* Rīga 1996, pp. 58-61

5 H. Strods, op cit. Rīga 1996, pp. 305-384

6 Ibid, pp. 365-372

7 H. Strods, op cit. Rīga 1996, pp. 310-312

8 Latvia State Archive (LVA; Archive of the Communist Party of Latvia, LKPA), F. 101, cat. 9, acta 73, p. 58

9 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 16, acta 41, pp. 182-189

10 See H. Strods, *Latvijas nacionālo partizānu karā kritušie. Kursas Laiks.* Liepāja, 1997. - 6.decembris

11 Arvydas Anušauskas, *Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas. 1940–1958.* Vilnius 1996

12 Der Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus / Hrsg. von J. Schmädecke und P. Steinbach. München–Zürich 1986

13 E. Razinski. *Stalin.* Moscow 1997; H. Strods. *Gulaga patrioti. Lauku Avīze.* 1998.- 9.aprīlis.

The Nonviolent Resistance Movement in Latvia (1944–1958)

HEINRIHS STRODS

The history of the nonviolent resistance movement in Latvia against the communist occupation between 1944 and 1958 is still at the stage of acknowledging and stating the facts as they appear in archives, and in published and unpublished memoirs. Some investigations have been made in the archives of the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee[1], but the archives of party committees of towns[2] (except the city of Riga) and districts have hardly been investigated. The archives of the Communist Party Committee of the State University of Latvia have been examined.[3] The least satisfactory investigations in the sphere of the nonviolent resistance movement have been made in the LSSR KGB archive on criminal cases of especially dangerous felons.[4] The Russian Federation State Archives, the archives of the former USSR KGB, etc., have not been made accessible; neither has the Latvian SSR NKVD (KGB) agency, among which the case of Latvian internal agents would have a special importance. The situation is clearer with contemporaries' published memoirs, but these touch mainly on the armed resistance. Research into the problems of the history of the nonviolent resistance movement in Latvia is still in its early stages[5] due to the short period between these events and today, as well as to the lack of documents. When investigating the history of the occupation period, historians today may be forced to speculate because of not having enough sources or no sources at all except the memories of the older generation, which rarely shares them with researchers.

This brief survey will deal only with the tip of the iceberg of the resistance movement as is shown in documents. It will deal with the measures to oppose the occupation regime taken by many of the intelligentsia, the economic resistance, belles-lettres and amateur performances as a kind of resistance. The connection between the Latvian resistance movement and émigrés has also not been investigated.[6]

The Latvian people can be divided into several groups according to their attitudes towards the communist occupation in the postwar period. The first

was those in criminal collaboration who held supreme power (the leaders of the LCP CC and its committees in towns and districts). The LSSR NKVD, KGB, the court and penal system belong to this group. It could be that communist idealism created a common purpose. The second group was the silent majority who appeared to be indifferent to everything that happened. Yet the roots of resistance could be found in this group as well. The third group could not reconcile themselves to the occupation, they were prepared to commit heroic deeds, less able to tolerate injustice, possessing more ideals and hope. It should be noted that during the communist occupation only socially, politically and ideologically "perfect" people had access to positions of responsibility.

The nonviolent resistance against the regime was the last stage of resistance, when, due to its suppression, armed resistance (the partisan movement) turned out to be impossible. Its motivation was mostly the same as that of the armed resistance. First, it was patriotism, with the aim of reestablishing the independent state of Latvia. More than 90 per cent of those in the underground organisations supported the independence of Latvia. Secondly, it was resistance against the economic and ideological stance of the communists.[7] Thirdly, the resistance fought for the nation's right to a democratic system and freedom of thought and religion. The nonviolent resistance was more widespread than the armed resistance. The nonviolent resistance against the communist dictatorship between 1944 and 1958 was similar to the struggle of most other European nations enslaved by communism and was a part of the resistance movement of these nations,[8] although it differed in several respects in intensity and in the sequence of events.

The nonviolent resistance against the occupation tried to work within the existing order to weaken and liquidate it. The form of resistance was varied. In the period under investigation, nonviolent resistance in Latvia, on one hand bordered on armed resistance, on the other hand it consisted of the nation's refusal to accept the regime, resisting its instructions, ideology and the ways of living and thinking it proposed.

The nonviolent resistance movement had several features in common and differences with the resistance movement between 1940 and 1944. First, they were both directed towards the physical and ideological power of the occupation. Shooting, arrests, rape and violations of civil rights (e.g. the confiscation of property) created fear which helped to keep the people obedi-

ent. The favourite methods of the LCP were terror, deportation, collectivisation and brainwashing. Secondly, as has already been said, the nonviolent resistance took place during the partisan war (1944–1956), came under its influence, and was helpful to the armed struggle. Thirdly, the nonviolent resistance was directed mainly against institutions and individuals of the Soviet empire, unlike in 1940 and 1941 when the Bolshevik occupation power in Latvia was supported by Latvian institutions, which made it close to a self-occupation. In 1944 and 1945 officials of the LCP CK, the secretaries of Communist Party regional committees and partly also the party organisers in villages and the police talked to the people with the help of interpreters (they spoke only the "language of the party"). These officials usually acted and behaved in a primitive and rude way. These ideological obscurants criticised sharply the 800-year-old culture of the Latvian people. The institutions of the LCP differed from those of Nazi Germany in that the latter, including the commissar of the Zemgale region, V.E. von Medem, and the mayor of Riga, Vitrāns, made public speeches in Latvian. The officials of the LCP power structures did not speak Latvian, which can be considered a lack of respect for the Latvian nation and its culture.

The main components of the nonviolent movement in the period under investigation were, firstly, the underground organisations, connected with the armed underground. The biggest underground organisations in Kursa and Lāčplēsis, the Young Hawks, Latvian Youth Union, etc, were connected with the armed resistance, but their activities are not covered much in documents now available in Latvia, and it would be premature to evaluate them. The leader of the Young Hawks, Jānis Klimkāns, later turned out to be a KGB agent under the alias of Dubins. This organisation, with all the instructions worked out by Dubins, was destroyed by him and its members were arrested. There were similar situations with some women's committees whose purpose was to give material help to partisan organisations.

The resistance movement of the students of the State University of Latvia has not been investigated at all. Some students were connected with the Latvian partisan movement. The resistance began in 1944 and 1945, when half of the university students did not attend the compulsory lectures on the history of the LCP given by the chair of Marxism-Leninism. Only by the end of the 1940s were the students forced to attend these, as they were called, "lessons in

creed", with the help of administrative measures. Between 1944 and 1953 Communist Party and Soviet officials reported to the LCP and LSSR NKVD (KGB). These officials can be divided into three parts. One, usually the biggest part, fulfilled, at least visibly, their tasks "for the party and the government", thus maintaining their privileged position in the workplace. It must be mentioned that there existed so-called "spiritual murderers" among the KGB agents who were historians, journalists and writers.

The second group of collaborators overdid their jobs and exacerbated the climate of fear. In the district of Viļaka, Pēteris Pīpo of the LSSR NKVD, together with the police, shot 43 local inhabitants during interrogation or just after court hearings. Murmilovs took away the property of the inhabitants (12 of the arrested had their watches stolen[9]), raped the women, took away their furniture, clothes and animals. Similar deeds were carried out in the district of Madona in the autumn of 1945 by Elmārs Laukmanis of the LCP CC. The second secretary of the Rezekne district committee of the LCP, Žurovskis, and party organiser Goreckis, arrested and beat peasants.

The third, quite small, group of party officials were not in contact with the people. As a result, they were influenced by or supported the armed or nonviolent resistance movements. They were usually the party organisers of the villages (A. Visockis of the village of Dūre in the district of Alūksne, J. Romanovskis of the village of Suseja in the district of Ilūkste, Elza Judeika of a village in the district of Madona). As a result, they were arrested or expelled from the party. This included also Communist Party organisers in several villages, and Pioneer leaders. Several Soviet officials were sentenced for leaving out some peasants' names while compiling lists for deportation. Yet these were exceptions among collaborators who fulfilled their party duties, thus being one of the causes for resistance.

The second most widespread kind of resistance was youth resistance. It existed during the partisan war between 1944 and 1956. Some of these groups tried to join the partisans. In the district of Tukums in February 1946 a group of eight schoolchildren accused of being "anti-Soviet counter-revolutionaries, saboteurs and terrorists" was arrested. After two months of interrogation five of them had still not been charged; three were sentenced.[10] In the same year members of the illegal organisation Latvijas Zeltene were arrested in Gulbene.[11] After discovering an underground youth group in the technical school in Ogre

who, on the days of mass deportations, 25 and 29 March 1945, tore up the portraits of "our leaders", the secretary of the Young Communist League of Latvia (LĻKJS), V. Krūmiņš, reported to the LCP CC secretary, F. Titov: "During the next academic year 20 members of the Young Communist League will be sent to the technical school in order to help the students recover."[12] The LCP CC tried to explain the nonviolent resistance, especially among the young, in terms of class enemies and rich peasants. During a sitting of the bureau in December 1947 the first secretary of the LCP CC, J. Kalnbērziņš, claimed that not only the older teachers but also children from kulak families must be expelled from secondary schools. "These children will not form good material for communism," Kalnbērziņš said. "You are making young communists' organisations with these people and it results in the fact that their gangs dominate in schools."[13] Kalnbērziņš' threats to the patriotic young people were carried out: 166 Komsomol members were deported from Latvia on 25 March 1949.[14] The deportation of young anti-communist Komsomol members, however, not only failed to limit the nonviolent resistance movement but even contributed to its growth to a considerable extent. The movement expanded greatly and was not detected until the 1950s.

However, even after the deportations to Siberia of some of its members, the Young Communist League was not completely devoted to communism. The LSSR KGB reported to the LCP CC in May 1950 that in the district of Jaunjelgava, in the former Birzgale village, on a collective farm called Darba vara, the young communist organisation was exposed and arrested as an armed nationalist organisation.[15]

However, the LSSR KGB managed to discover anti-communist organisations in schools more frequently than in the Young Communist League. In Riga in January 1953, 50 anti-Soviet proclamations written and distributed by the pupils of Riga seven-year school No 5 and secondary school No 2 were found. They belonged to the anti-communist group The Flame. During a search 256 anti-Soviet proclamations were found. The girls confessed that they had distributed the proclamations in January and February 1953. Anti-communist proclamations were made and distributed by six pupils of the fourth form of Riga seven-year school No 33. Two pupils at Cēsis seven-year school No 1 made and distributed anti-Soviet proclamations. It was typical of the 1950s that children became involved in this movement.

It is impossible to enumerate in this paper all the schools where the KGB discovered and arrested members of anti-communist groups. Four pupils of Gostiņu seven-year school in the district of Pļavinas, a pupil of the fourth form, Janis Rozentāls, from Kabile seven-year school in the district of Kuldīga made anti-communist proclamations in February and March 1953. Nine anti-communist leaflets were found in the village of Rauza, in the district of Smiltene, on 8 March 1953. Consequently, four members of a group were sentenced for having distributed them. Anti-communist leaflets were found in Līksna seven-year school in the district of Daugavpils on 14 March. Four pupils of Balvu secondary school, form 10, were arrested as an "anti-communist group" on 18 March 1953. The group used to distribute the books and magazines of "bourgeois" Latvia among the young and praised the "bourgeois" regime. They discussed the BBC and the Voice of America news broadcasts, laughed at the meeting on the occasion of Stalin's death and scorned those who cried.[16] In 1953 some anti-communist groups were detected in the area of Alsunga, in Ēdole, in Riga secondary school No 2, Ludza vocational school No 5, and Jelgava seven-year school No 2. These instances allow us to say that the youth resistance movement in the 1950s was a mass phenomenon.

On 23 February 1953 the first secretary of the LCP CK, Kalnbērziņš, reported secretly to the secretary of the CPSU CC, G. Malenkov, about the growth of Latvia's anti-communist youth movement. "Over the last six months," he wrote, "the manifestations of the activities of bourgeois nationalism and anti-communism by schoolchildren have become more frequent in Latvia." The KGB institutions detected eight underground anti-communist youth groups in Rīga, Jelgava and the Talsi area, members of which arranged the distribution of anti-communist leaflets and information from the BBC and the Voice of America. "At present 51 people from ten to 25 take part in underground groups, including five members of the Young Communist League of the USSR (VĻKJS) and 11 pioneers. Every group has from four to eight members."[17] Kalnbērziņš requested 99 Komsomol organisers in addition to the 11 working ones to be sent to work at secondary schools.

The distribution of proclamations and direct agitation against Soviet power dominated the activities of the young nonviolent resistance movement. However, acts of violent resistance (the collection of weapons and ammunition, attacks on penal institutions) were sometimes carried out by some groups.

Thus, disturbances of a political character began in vocational school No 5 in Ludza on 17 September 1953. The pupils made anti-Soviet speeches at the cinema and at the memorial to the soldiers of the Red Army killed during the war. Later they attacked a policeman. On 21 September 1953 a group of over 50 people encircled the department of the LSSR Ministry of Internal Affairs in the district of Ludza and hurled stones at the windows.[18] In the middle of 1953 nine pupils of Rīga secondary school No 2 were arrested, and two pistols, 500 bullets and detonators were confiscated. The group had made and distributed anti-communist proclamations. Six guns, 529 bullets, two kilograms of explosives and a national flag of Latvia were found in the possession of four pupils of Talsi secondary school and seven-year school No 2. The group had also distributed leaflets with an appeal to revolt. (The secondary school of Talsi, school of Ēdole, Rīga secondary school No 2, etc.)

A report by Ļevkovičs (the head of LSSR Ministry of Internal Affairs, Department 4) on 25 March 1954 to the LCP CC gave a notion of the mass character of the pupils' anti-communist organisations.[19]

The student and schoolchildren organisations, unless they performed self-education work only, became infiltrated by KGB agents and got caught quickly. Several underground resistance groups of schoolchildren came under the surveillance of the KGB. In one way the organisations established by the LSSR KGB contributed to the establishment of illegal anti-communist organisations. Thus in 1949 the LSSR KGB set up an anti-communist youth organisation, Struggle Against World Communism, in Daugavpils. It was formed by Daugavpils security department, Lieutenant Colonel Strelnikov and the chief of the security section of the department, Viktor Sidelnikov. Seven young people who worked in the organisation under the surveillance of the LSSR KGB were arrested and sentenced to 25 years in prison in 1950.[20] However, later the USSR KGB forbade such serious punishment of members of youth organisations set up by the KGB itself, especially if KGB agents made up half or more of the "underground group". Group work turned out not to be the best way of resistance, due to infiltration by KGB agents and the rapid detection of their activities. Therefore, during the 1950s the activity of groups decreased.

On the whole the youth resistance movement which took up armed resistance in the first half of the 1950s had the same motives as the armed resistance movement, although there were some additional ones. First, the young felt

the terrible situation of the state very acutely. Secondly, after the mass deportations in 1949 young people were dissatisfied with the regime which forced them to study dogmatic Marxism-Leninism and to join the Young Communist League. Thirdly, they were worried about those "foreign to the class" and not only youth, who could not be enrolled in universities or the best secondary and vocational educational institutions. Fourthly, they disliked Russification, and the cultivation of Russian racism against young people of Jewish or German descent whose enrolment in higher education institutions was delayed in every possible way. Fifthly, armed resistance in youth organisations was popular due to the fact that it was exciting: ammunition and weapons which were collected from battlefields were put in order and kept, although they gradually became unusable, even if well stored.

The opposition of the intelligentsia was the third aspect of the nonviolent resistance. There was no strong and openly nonconformist movement within the Latvian intelligentsia, since they expressed it mainly in traditional values, which were not officially prohibited. Due to censorship only political material approved by the Communist Party was published. Therefore, in the first years of the occupation an interest in pre-war popular literature appeared, especially in the originals and translations of foreign fiction, still in private libraries. The wish arose to discuss that literature in comparison with the current situation. Consequently, groups of like-minded people were set up and they exchanged books. On the initiative of the artist Kurts Fridrihsons, a group of intellectuals used to gather on Mondays in order to discuss, read reports and debate matters of cultural significance. Even though the number of members was always changing, and no matters of political significance were touched upon, some of the members were arrested at the end of 1950 and the beginning of 1951. They were accused of collaboration with a "French circle", since some matters connected with French culture used to be discussed during these Monday meetings. In the case of the French circle, the poet Professor Atis Ķēniņš (1877–1961) was put on trial because his wife Austra Dāle (1892–1973) participated in some meetings. The poet Elza Stērste and Kurts Fridrihsons were sentenced to 25 years in prison, as were the actors Stubavs and M. Ozoliņš, and the translator M. Silmale. The arrests of the Latvian intellectuals can be considered to be an intimidation campaign by the KGB in the process of the Sovietisation of Latvia.

The Social Democrats of the first Republic of Latvia, K. Lorencs, Fr. Mend-

ers and V. Grīviņš, were the other group which was persecuted at the time. They were accused of making attempts to communicate with the Latvian Social Democratic Labour party in Sweden. However, in Latvia the political nonviolent resistance movement became widespread in the postwar years, and, as will be shown later, it sometimes adopted pro-Soviet forms in communist circles. Despite the fact that the spiritual resistance against communist power took place at all levels of society, resisting the occupation, it was also expressed quite clearly by the activities of academics. It was demonstrated by the avoidance of themes which the regime considered to be particularly important: the doctrines of the Soviet linguist Marr, the criticism of international imperialism and Zionism, the October Revolution and investigation of recent history. Many academics tried to turn to themes where it was possible to come to purely academic conclusions, such as, for instance, archaeology, ethnography and feudal history, which were unlikely to become politicised by the regime, even though promotion, awards and bonuses were much rarer in these less political branches of learning. Secondly, only academic works were published which contained compulsory quotations from Marxism-Leninism classics and the decisions of the current Communist Party Congress in the introduction. However, these quotations used to be the only Marxist content in the works. Even nonconformist lecturers at the university were obliged to start lectures with a compulsory minimum of leading quotations.[21] Thirdly, many researchers and teachers gave up their professions in order not to have to praise the regime. Those who did not were consequently dismissed from their posts. The rector J. Jurgens reported to the LCP CC that 21 lecturers (20 per cent), 17 laboratory assistants-secretaries (37.4 per cent) and 56 administrative staff (15.4 per cent) were dismissed from the State University of Latvia from 1 January 1949 to 29 July 1950 for being politically unreliable.[22] Between 1944 and 1948, 870 students were expelled, as "foreign to the class". The spiritual resistance and the purification of intelligence is at present being reinvestigated as a sphere of the resistance movement.

Economic resistance, which was the fourth aspect of the nonviolent resistance movement, should be investigated specially. It should be distinguished from ordinary theft, so typical of the occupation period, and the traditional stealing of state property in the Soviet empire. The essential point of economic resistance was its opposition to the Soviet system and its methods of

management. At times, Latvian peasants considered their ideological instructions to be the deeds of the insane. The nationalisation of property and collectivisation by force[23] brought peasants almost to starvation. The concealing of corn, the failure to make compulsory deliveries to the state and the evasion of official timber levies were typical forms of resistance. The manufacture of goods for illegal sale, avoiding official systems in every possible way, was practised in factories. There were some difficulties in overcoming traditional working practices in the first ten years of the occupation, but the regime itself and its officials assisted in this respect. As archive material testifies, everybody was corruptible and capable of being made drunk, including KGB and LCP functionaries. By the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, LSSR KGB structures, which often attached political significance to economic offences, took over the struggle against these misdemeanours from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. A political meaning was attached to the destruction of collective farm barns and stock breeding farms even by lightning. The KGB, examining reports by the Communist Party Committee, learned that during a fire at a farm there had been neither rain nor thunder. Due to drinking and negligence by the workers the cattle perished and technical appliances and other property was destroyed. The farms suffered continuous crop failures. Careless work became a hallmark of Soviet production, which meant not only illegal work, but also a low standard of official work. Misappropriation of new materials and products became widespread. This opposition to the system, created by the system itself, destroyed and ruined it. The Latvian people learned by experience, building the foundation for the economic collapse of the USSR.

New features appeared in the nonviolent movement in Latvia after the death of the devoted Leninist Joseph Stalin and the Khrushchev thaw, under the influence of revolutions in East Germany, Georgia and Hungary. Firstly, youth resistance groups continued. In 1956 and 1957, LSSR KGB agents learned that armed youth organisations had been set up again in the district of Ogre at the Suntaži and Skrīveri secondary school. The head of the KGB in the district of Ogre, Ziediņš, instructed his officials to form a network of agents in all secondary education institutions. Secondly, by the middle of the 1950s[24] more than 21,000 political prisoners and about 18,000 exiles had returned. There were more than 500 former members of patriotic organisations and groups among them. According to KGB data, they established "more than 20 active national-

ist organisations" in Latvia. The KGB also had information about membership in nationalist organisations by these people even while in prison, such as, for instance, the Union of Northern Struggle, The Latvian and others.[25] An organisation in Vorkuta, Russia, was established by Laukmanis, a former battalion commander. These deportees who returned to Latvia and attempted to restore the larger patriotic organisations were arrested again in 1957. Ints Cālītis reassembled the members of the banned youth organisation Lāčplēsis in Rīga, Inčukalns, on 16 November 1957, and tried to set up the organisation again. According to KGB data, the new anti-communist organisation temporarily rejected armed struggle, accepting, however, that it may take place under proper circumstances. The LCP CC quickly suppressed such attempts to renew the nonviolent resistance movement. On 3 September 1956 the LCP CC decided secretly to limit the distribution of the magazine *America*, allowing it to be sold on LCP CC newsstands only, and only "politically educated, ideologically determined" people were allowed to subscribe to it.[26] The building and organisation of services and facilities of the four foreign broadcasting stations (in Riga, Daugavpils, Liepāja and Ventspils) were extended. On 21 February 1957 the first secretary of the LCP CC, J. Kalnbērziņš, secretly requested the CPSU CK to pass the unpublished decree which prohibited former political officials, active national underground fighters and the leaders of anti-communist organisations to return to Latvia after serving their sentence.[27]

Pro-Soviet opposition, later called national communism, was the fifth kind of nonviolent resistance. Pro-Soviet opposition, which recognised Soviet power, but, as has already been mentioned, could not become reconciled with some aspects of it, evolved between the 1940s and 1950s. Usually opposition was not organised, however, and communists and senior officials of the Soviet establishment used to take part. In 1945 the vice chairman of the executive committee in the district of Jēkabpils, J. Mazurēvičs, the secretary of the committee, A. Purviņš, and the Red Partisans commissar, O. Oškalns, organised the Bachelors Club, where they criticised official Soviet celebrations. Some of the club's members were punished (Mazurēvičs was sentenced to 25 years) and the others were put under surveillance.[28] An anti-communist organisation operated in Tukums between 1946 and 1948, in which several Communist Party officials took part. When they were arrested one member was killed, one later committed suicide, the others were expelled from the party. Although

the society was a counter-revolutionary nationalist organisation, the fact that action was brought against them makes us think that it was a part of the pro-Soviet opposition. The wave of pro-Soviet opposition increased after the deportations of 25 March 1949. Ten communists were expelled from the party for refusing to participate in the mass deportations.[29] Altogether, more than 30,000 party activists took part in deportations.

During the Khrushchev thaw, when freedom of thought grew, dissident thinking started to spread. In the process, people became causes and victims simultaneously. By the middle of the 1950s the pro-Soviet opposition emphasised the legal aspect of the struggle. The members of this organisation claimed that the rapid industrial development and the mass immigration of Russian-speaking people must be limited. The legal opposition – the members of the LCP CC bureau, E. Berklavs[30] and V. Krūmiņš, and the director of the Institute of Economics of the LSSR Academy of Sciences, P. Dzerve – spoke out against the economic policy of the LCP CC, according to which the building of enormous factories and the resulting immigration of Russian-speaking colonists (up to 30,000 annually) was planned. During the plenum of the LCP CC in 1959, after the defeat of the opposition, 30 leading members were dismissed from their posts. Many of them were exiled to Russia (E. Berklavs, A. Nikonovs, etc.). The screening of communists took place all over Latvia. It resulted in the intensification of Russification.

The pro-Soviet opposition was not limited to officialdom. In fact it was more varied. The LVU lecturer, the communist Goross, and his allies, spoke against the campaign of growing maize, and attempted to introduce a multi-party system in the USSR. The pro-Soviet opposition usually had a negative attitude towards the anti-communist nationalist opposition. It was dissatisfied with the return of Latvian political prisoners. However, the refusal of the pro-Soviet opposition to begin an armed struggle brought them closer.

The industrialisation, urbanisation and collectivisation of Latvia was the result of a demographic plan by the Soviet regime and the outcome of this colonisational plan. The communist regime attempted to identify the national culture, lifestyle and traditions with the Russian Empire, depriving people of their nationality, culture, history and traditions, constructing "homo sovieticus". Most of the Latvian people could not identify Latvia with the USSR. However, the majority of the young people of Latvia lived within the

boundaries fixed by the regime. Many started to believe that the occupation was an inevitable evil. As a result of the continuous communist propaganda and most of the people becoming the "silent majority" (agnostics), a fear of power, self-censorship and social fatalism spread; consequently, crime dominated. However, often the political destruction of the communist system did not bring about the complete elimination of the world outlook belonging to the period of occupation. Consequently, a contemporary, dull, unconditional conformism replaced the old, dull communist conformism.

Thus we can see that the political resistance movement to the regime in Latvia in its first stage (1944–1957) spread mainly among the young and the intelligentsia. The opposition to the regime, which contributed to its destruction, spread among the communists and members of Komsomol as well, i.e., within the guiding force of the regime. The Soviet government believed that both these social groups – the Latvian youth, in which it had great hope, and the collaborationist government – registered the "bright communist future". Apart from physical force, isolation and propaganda, the government began to apply more elaborate methods in the suppression of the nonviolent resistance in its later period. This was when political surveillance established by the LSSR KGB first took place.

1 Latvia State Archive (LVA), F. 101
2 LVA, F102
3 LVA, F788
4 LVA, F1986
5 T. Vilciņš, *Latvijas skolu jaunatnes nacionālā cīņa 1940-1941*. Riga 1997; Ā. Šilde, *Važu rāvēji*. Copenhagen 1960
6 A. Grava, *Ar citiem ieročiem*. Archīvs. Melbourne 1986, pp 7-16
7 *Izpostītā zeme*. Riga 1997; J. Riekstiņš, *Ekspropriācija* (1940–1959). Riga 1998; Ā. Šilde, *The Profits of Slavery*. Stockholm 1958
8 *Der Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus*. München-Zürich 1994
9 Archive of the Communist Party of Latvia (LKPA), F. 101, cat 9, acta 60, pp. 9-12
10 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 9, acta 71, p. 55
11 Ibid, cat. 13, acta 15, p. 5
12 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 12, acta 74, p. 41
13 Ibid, cat. 10, acta 50, p. 545
14 LVA, F. 201, cat. 1, acta 687, pp. 1-20
15 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 13, acta 14, p. 51
16 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 16, acta 22-a, p. 36
17 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 16, acta 93, pp. 21-22
18 Ibid, acta 22-a, p. 36
19 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 17, acta 60-a, pp. 59-73
20 Ibid, pp. 154-155
21 The LKP report "On the Personnel of the State University of Latvia". *History of Latvia*. 1998 No 1, pp. 124-134 (in Latvian)
22 H. Strods, *Latvijas Universitāte okupācijas gados (1940–1991)*. *Latvijas Vēsture*. 1997 No 4, p. 7
23 H. Strods, *Latvijas lauksaimniecības vēsture*. Rīga 1992
24 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 21, acta 48-a, p. 39
25 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 21, acta 48-a, pp. 41-42
26 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 19, acta 56, p. 13
27 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 20, acta 80, p. 75
28 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 8, acta 20, pp. 345-349
29 LVA (LKPA), F. 101, cat. 12, acta 19, p. 120; acta 9, p. 258
30 E. Berklavs, *Zināt un neaizmirst*. Rīga 1998

The Roman Catholic Church of Latvia and the Resistance Movement (1944–1990)

HEINRIHS STRODS

The Roman Catholic Church is the oldest in the country. It began with a Danish mission and the building of the first church in north Kurzeme in 1074. The Orthodox Church began its missions in east Latvia, Jersika and Koknese, in the 12th century. However, according to research by Professor I. Šterns (USA), its importance outside these centres was insignificant.[1] By the end of the 12th century Christianity had taken a strong hold in Latvia as a result of the German missions and the first peaceful preaching by Bishop St. Mainard (1184–1196). After 1198 the Crusades began. Starting in 1202 with the establishment of the Order of the Brothers of the Sword, and especially after the formation of the Order of Livonia in 1237, the missions were mixed with violence that opposed Christian ideals. From the 13th century until 1561 the state of Livonia ruled in Latvia and Estonia, the supreme power of which de jure belonged to the Pope in Rome and his representative in Riga, but de facto was illegally seized by the Order of Livonia.

Although the Church must never rule the state and vice versa, both situations in different periods have existed in the history of the Latvian Roman Catholic Church. During the Livonian period the archbishop ruled the confederation of Livonia, but during the years of the communist occupation the state ruled over the Church. Lithuania, and partly Estonia, can be regarded as monoconfessional countries, but there were three Christian faiths at the time in Latvia (Catholics numbered 500,000, Protestants 500,000, Orthodox 200,000) and none of them could be considered as prevailing. However, the role of the Catholic Church in the resistance movement in Latvia was in no way smaller than that in Lithuania.

The communist regime's persecution of Christian religions and their opposition has not been researched yet. The Holocaust has been well investigated, but the Christians' struggle against the atheistic totalitarian regime in Latvia has not been specially investigated. It was only begun after the collapse of the Soviet empire. Some research has been done by Monsignor H. Trops

(1908–1994).[2] Basing his research on material in archives in Latvia and foreign countries (Russia, France, the Vatican), Professor Strods described it in a monograph[3] of some 70 pages. Research into the history of some Catholic churches and their congregations[4] and the life of Cardinal Julijans Vaivods[5] has already begun.

Besides the nonviolent resistance movement of the laity against the Soviet regime, the resistance movement of the Church can also be regarded as a particular kind of resistance. The struggle against the Catholic Church was led by the authorities – CPSU CC and LCP CC Latvia, where antireligious propaganda was directed by a special instructor, as well as the regional committees of the towns and districts. The instructions of the authorities were carried out by the Council of Religious Cults of the LSSR and executive committees in the towns and districts.

During the communist occupation the persecution of the Catholic Church concerned all the faithful, the whole Catholic Church. There were violations of the economic, political and civil rights of the Church in all spheres. That is why we must speak about the general persecution of the Catholic Church, which was primarily part of the communist struggle against the "rotten Western culture" and its "watchdog", the Pope.

In the economic sphere, parishes were deprived of land and houses, which was to destroy them economically, as it was written in communist reports. In the political sphere, the communists tried to establish their pseudoreligion – Marxism-Leninism – in the place of the oldest Christian confession in Latvia. Marxism-Leninism was intended to re-educate or destroy adults and to educate the young in the spirit of communist ideology, in order to form "homo sovieticus", turning Latvia into a launching pad for a jump to Western countries in order to establish the supremacy of this destructive ideology there.

The Catholic Church in Latvia prepared for the communist occupation in 1944 with the instruction from the Archbishop of Riga, A. Springovičs (1876–1958), for all the priests to stay in their places. With the communist occupation approaching, 36 priests emigrated[6], notably from Kurzeme (18.5%). Three bishops – J. Rancāns (1886–1969), A. Urbšis (1879–1965) and B. Sloskāns (1893–1981) – were forced to leave for Germany. Ten of the most prominent priests would be appointed to take over the administration of the Church if the episcopacy was destroyed. These priests knew their

predecessors, but did not know their successors any more. After the communist occupation the Riga archbishopric and Liepāja bishopric, with all their congregations, churches, chapels and prayer houses remained, but immediately the attack on the Church, led by the new regime and its collaborators, began. The attack can be divided into two periods, according to the methods used. The first was a period of direct attacks, beginning after the occupation and lasting approximately until 1958. The second period lasted from 1959 until 1991.

The aim of the Soviet empire was to destroy Christianity and to create atheist "Soviet people" in Latvia, thus uniting the Soviet Union and beginning the spread of the class dictatorship throughout the world. The USSR CPSU CC leadership and LCP CC tried to achieve this in three ways. First, by "beheading" the Catholic Church, prohibiting the appointment of new bishops and forbidding those appointed by the Pope (the apostolic administrator Začests) to work, or allowing only the remote bishoprics (in Liepāja) to work, or trying to force the new bishops (Bishop Pēteris Strods, 1882–1960) to accept their regulations. In accepting these the bishops had to promise to fight for peace, calling on the faithful and on priests to be loyal to the regime. After two hours of reflection Bishop Strods was forced to sign these regulations in Moscow.

Secondly, the beheading of the Church was carried out by tracking down, arresting, shooting or deporting the most active priests. From 1944 to 1973, 70 priests were arrested, or 40 per cent of all active priests in 1944. Seven of the arrested (ten per cent) were killed and 12 (17 per cent) died in prison of torture or from the conditions. The others were sentenced to prison terms of usually ten to 15 years. In addition, between 1961 and 1972, several priests were prohibited from carrying out their duties for up to four years, mainly because of "disloyal, anti-Soviet sermons preached in church" (these priests were also involved in social work[8]).

Thirdly, within the beheading policy, the activities of the Catholic Theological Seminary were restricted, by not allowing it to enrol the number of students necessary to maintain the normal operations of the Church. In 1954 there were only 11 students at the seminary. By arresting priests and limiting the education of new ones, the communist regime hoped that the "beheaded remains of capitalism" would disappear.

Fourthly, constant transfers of priests controlled by the LCP CC and LSSR NKVD-MGB-KGB were carried out, thus not allowing them to get used to their parishes and lead the anti-communist resistance. The most profitable parishes were given to the priests most obedient to the regime.

Fifthly, at the beginning it was prohibited to celebrate the main church feast days on weekdays, and the participation in them of priests from neighbouring parishes was restricted, as were ceremonies outside churches.

Sixthly, teachers were banned from services, and no religious education was allowed at schools. From 1959 to 1964 six Latvian priests were sentenced to one or two years of hard labour for catechising children.[9]

Seventhly, the regime tried to force the resignation of priests by blackmail, propaganda and individual discourse. As a result, in the period from 1945 to 1970, eight priests gave up the priesthood. (Two were later allowed again to work as priests.) Some of these were exploited for propaganda, by organising lectures and publishing their memoirs[10] and articles. There could have been KGB informers among the Catholic priests in Latvia. The priests who went abroad may have had some tasks to do for the KGB.

During the post-war years a resistance movement was organised (involving more than 20,000 people from 1944 until 1956), and also nonviolent resistance, developing from the national communist resistance of the youth and intellectuals to the spiritual resistance between 1970 and 1980. Most Latvian Catholic priests, with a few exceptions, were in sympathy with the armed resistance, although they were not convinced that partisan warfare was the best means for the liberation of Latvia. However, some priests participated in organising and cooperating with the partisans of Catholic eastern Latvia. For example, in 1945 the parish priest in Vanagu, A. Juhnēvičs (1905–1946), became the chairman of the Union of the Latvian Fatherland Guards. After his arrest Juhnēvičs was shot at the central prison in Riga in 1946. The parish priest in Šķilbēnu, A. Štagars, also participated in this partisan group. He arranged a chapel in one of the bunkers of the partisan camp in Stampaki Moor where he held services. The priest at Nautrēni, A. Šļakota, lived in hiding up to 1957. Several priests offered services and anointed the dying partisans.

The official attitude of the Catholic Church of Latvia towards the partisans was different. It was under the very strong influence of the regime. That was why Archbishop Springovičs, under pressure from the KGB, published a "pa-

triotic" appeal to the partisans to declare themselves,[11] and Bishop Strods urged them to fight for peace. However, he refused to condemn the "warmongers in the West". Still, these and other announcements by the Church were not always read out in churches, and most of the recommendations for individual debates with the faithful remained in written form only. These appeals were not supposed to be read out in churches, but were for the priests and as an inducement for private discourse with the faithful. The only exception was the appeal for the partisans to come out of hiding, but the reading of this appeal from the pulpit concerned only the parishes around Viļakas and Ludzas. This declaration was made by the archbishop on 20 March 1945 with the instruction that the announcement should be made only after a declaration of amnesty had been put up in the villages and at the churches by the local security authorities.

It shows that the Church was not and could not be loyal to the communist regime that tried to destroy it. The Church became more compliant only from the 1960s to the 1980s when minimal rights and freedoms were promised. At that time the Church was governed by Bishop, later Cardinal, Vaivods (1895–1990). However, practice showed that even if the Church had tried to be loyal to the regime and supported it officially, it would not have been able to find its place in society. The Church was required to give, but it was given little in return.

Although the regime succeeded in forcing an officially negative attitude from the archbishop towards the partisan movement, that did not significantly influence the suppression of the partisan movement. First of all, the priests with a little more freedom than the bishop's office were able to neutralise opinion about the negative attitude of the Church towards the resistance movement, widespread in official propaganda. Secondly, the armed resistance had the highest numbers and the best organisation in the traditionally Catholic regions of east Latvia. Thirdly, around 1947 and 1948, the regime ceased to force priests to restrict the partisan movement. Fourthly, KGB agents understood that the partisans and supporters of the resistance movement had less contact with the legally working priests, because if they were caught they were afraid the Church might suffer.

From the 1960s, judging from data provided by the LSSR KGB, the strongest resistance was shown by intellectuals, the young and the Church. The

second period in the resistance of the Catholic Church of Latvia began. The struggle against the Church, as before, was led by the town and district committees of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League. The work was directed by the Council of Scientific Atheism of the LSSR in Riga to which the councils in regions and towns reported. Members of the council listened to priests' sermons, and reported those who went to church and had church baptisms, weddings and funerals. The role of the USSR Union for Atheism (1925–1947) was given to the council in 1947, whose role was also the struggle against religion. Communist Party ideology was taught at schools and universities as "scientific atheism". The teaching was directed by special chairs of "scientific communism" at universities, and staff were appointed by the LCP CC.

Secondly, the Church recommended keeping to the Christian idea of love for one's neighbour, regardless of social origins, which, according to communist ideology, was an "inborn sin".

Thirdly, the Church indirectly took a stand against the doctrine of the Russian imperialists about the good, moral features of socialism in the USSR and other socialist countries and the immoral capitalism of the USA and democratic Western countries (Catholicism itself had begun as a Western faith).

Fourthly, the Church promoted spiritual nonconformity among the faithful, offering services in churches for believers from other regions and other republics of the USSR who were not allowed to attend church there, thus promoting a kind of Nicodemism.

Fifthly, the Church, especially during the final period of the communist occupation, supplied the faithful with printed religious literature that replaced the earlier typewritten literature of the occupation period. It also continued the individual catechisation of the young in families. "The activities of Catholic priests," the LCP CC office reported in 1959, "particularly affect anti-Soviet activities."[12]

Sixthly, under the wing of the Church of Latvia, Cardinal Vaivods and Monsignor Trops, as well as some Catholic-oriented lay historians, did a significant job in the field of objective investigation into the history of the Church, although the official name of the research sometimes differed from its aims. Thus Cardinal Vaivods, while still the administrator of the Liepāja diocese and later its bishop, wrote the most extensive paper on the history of the

Latvian Catholic Church. Although the paper was only typewritten, the cardinal was sentenced to two years' hard labour for it. He served his sentence. The books were published after the independence of Latvia.[13] Bishop Jānis Cakuls collected material for Cardinal Vaivods and prepared investigations for the bishop's office about priests[14] and the history of the parishes.[15] Monsignor Trops gave lectures about the history of the Catholic Church, especially that in Latvia,[16] at the seminary in Riga.

Seventhly, the Church offered a professional and spiritual education independent of the communist system, and formed an independent position. From 1946 until 1990, 277 priests graduated from the seminary, some of whom (85 priests) were prepared for work in Ukraine, Belarus, Russia and Estonia. In 1965 there were 148 priests in the 178 Catholic parishes in Latvia, and 97 clergymen in 238 Protestant parishes. In 1971, 25 to 28 per cent of all newborn babies were baptised in the church in Latvia, 70 to 80 per cent of which were in Catholic regions.

By the 1960s and 1970s the LCP CC had succeeded in forcing people to accept the so-called "Khrushchev thaw", formal destalinisation and a planned liberalisation in politics, economics and science. However, communists often made future enemies for themselves, by leaving space for neither a national nor a Christian way of thinking, not even in the aspirations of the young for independence. Communist pressure created the conditions for independent political activity with anti-Soviet aims. The new generation did not want to continue the "October Revolution". According to the LCP CC, in the 1960s and 1970s communists were very dissatisfied with the activities of the Church. This was shown by the number of laws passed against the Church and the measures taken in order to execute them.[17] Secondly, the ideological struggle of the Communist Party against the Church intensified during the nonviolent resistance, after the period of national armed opposition in the middle of the 1950s, when the Catholic Church was considered to be the northernmost Western influence in the USSR.

It was mostly in Catholic regions and towns where the Communist Party sent between 150 and 300 specially instructed atheist agents and lecturers to fight against religion.[18] While during the armed struggle the Soviet authorities tried to destroy their opponents – priests and believers – mainly physically (by shooting, imprisoning, deporting, etc.), after "the foundation of socialism has

been laid," beginning in the second half of the 1950s, special attention was paid to the spiritual destruction of anti-Soviet elements. Attention was paid to the young, the intelligentsia and the Church especially. Former priests and former Catholics were used for this purpose. They condemned their past in the press, over the radio and in pamphlets. Agents were used to gain priests' loyalty towards the Soviet power, not to permit "fanatics and protégés of reactionary clerics" to enter the seminary, to compromise the clergy to get information about the Vatican and to inform the Vatican about the Church's activities in Latvia.

The Catholic Church resisted all the abovementioned measures. As a result, it resisted the communist ideology, imbuing the people with moral standards and bringing nearer the country's revival. The Catholic Church, being the most attacked by the regime and its ideologues, survived with economic and physical losses but spiritually strong, a rock that could not be shaken by the atheist power,[19] having helped in the collapse of the power of the Communist Party in Latvia.

1 I. Šterns, *Pareizticība Senlatvijā*. Latvijas vēsture. 1996, Nr. 4, pp. 20-23

2 H. Trops, *Latvijas Romas katoļu Baznīca komunisma gados, 1940.–1990*. Rīga 1992

3 H. Strods, *Latvijas katoļu Baznīcas vēsture, 1905.–1990*. Rīga 1996

4 Bīskaps J. Cakurs, *Latvijas Romas katoļu priesteri, 1918.–1992*. Rīga 1996; Bīskaps J. Cakuls, *Latvijas Romas katoļu draudzes*. Rīga 1997, p. 800

5 S. Gaidule. *Julijans kardināls Vaivods dzīvē un darbā*. Rīga 1998. Ms

6 Bīshaps Jānis Cakuls, *Latvijas Romas katoļu priesteri, 1918.–1995*. Rīga 1996, pp. 260, 293-294

7 *Razjasnenije episkopu Petry Strodu*. Latvia State Archive (LVA), F. 27, 1.-s apr., 1294.lieta, pp. 59-61

8 Bīshaps Jānis Cakuls, *Latvijas Romas katoļu priesteri*. Rīga 1996, p. 312; Rt. H. Voldemars, *The Baltic States – the First Victims of Communist Brutality*. Latvia. New York, 1946; Adolfs Šilde, *The Profits of Slavery*. Stockholm 1958

9 Bīskaps Jānis Cakuls, *Latvijas Romas katoļu priesteri*. Rīga 1996, p. 312

10 B. Zvejsalnieks, *Zaudētie gadi*. Rīga 1974

11 H. Strods, *Latvijas katoļu Baznīcas vēsture*. Rīga 1996, pp. 297-298

12 LVA, F. 101, 1.-s apr., 15.-s lieta, 1958.g., pp. 1-3

13 J. Vaivods, *Katoļu baznīcas vēsture Latvijā*. I-III sēj. I-IV sēj. Rīga 1994

14 J. Cakuls, *Latvijas Romas katoļu baznīcas priesteri, 1918.–1995*. Rīga 1996, p. 431

15 J. Cakuls, *Latvijas Romas katoļu draudzes*. Rīga 1997, p. 800

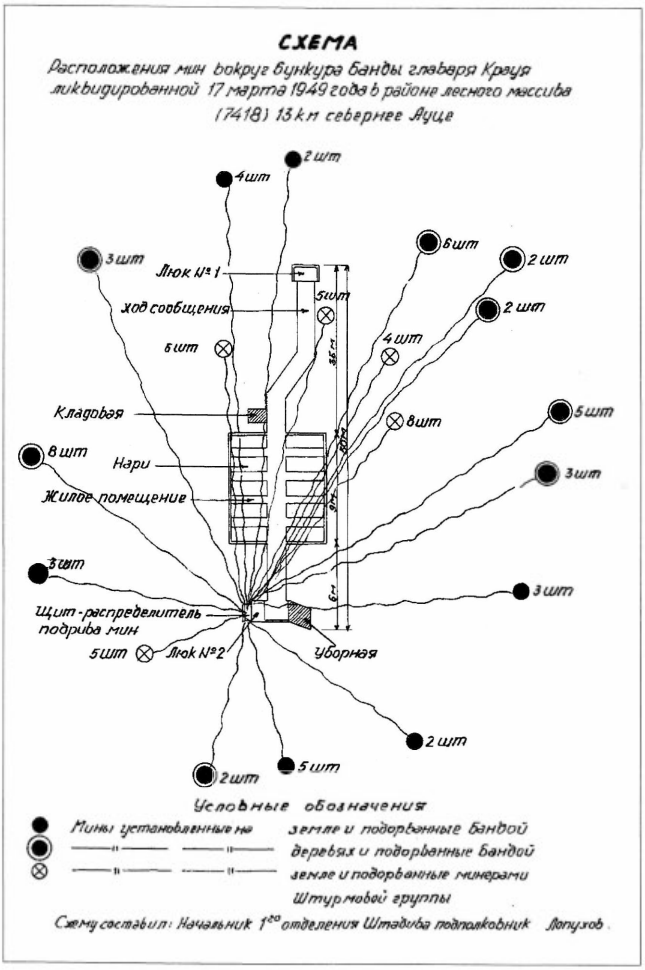
16 H. Trops, *Latvijas Romas katoļu baznīca komunisma gados, 1940.–1990*. Rīga 1992

17 H. Strods, *Latvijas katoļu Baznīcas vēsture*. Rīga 1996

18 LVA, F. 101, 39.apr., 111.lieta, pp. 16-115

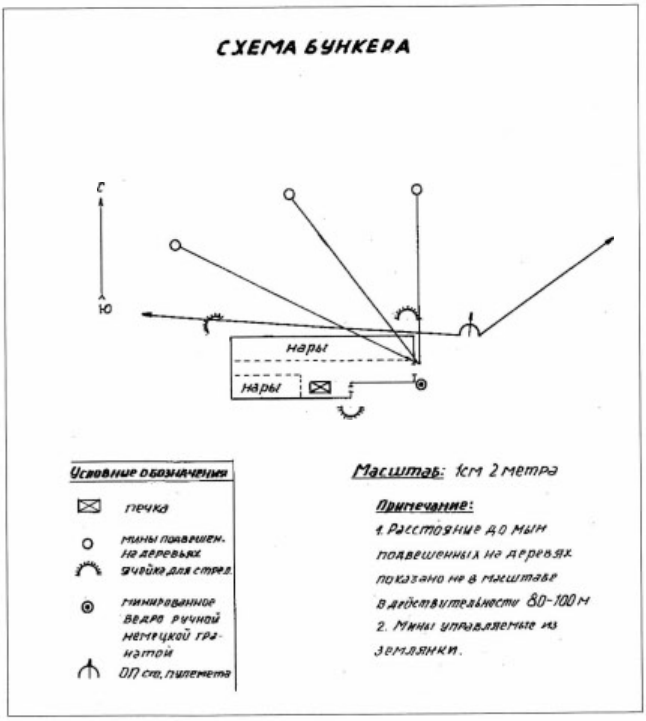
19 B. Gonska, *Die pastorellen Aufgaben der polnischen Kirche nach dem Ende des Kommunismus*. Fr/M., 1996

Latvian partisans in September 1946



Plan of a shelter of a Latvian–Lithuanian company destroyed in Latvia on 17 March 1949 (also opposite)

Guns unearthed in the Valmiera and Valks districts in the Latvian SSR in 1949



LATVIEŠI - BOLŠEVIKU LĪDZSKRĒJĒJI.

Latviešu tauta ar riebumu un nicināšanu noskatās uz Jūsu nelietīgo Jūdasa darbu.Par nieka grašiem jūs pārdodat savu tautu un savu godu,klanīdamies un kalpodami svešiem varmākām.Jūs savus riebīgos un netīros instinktus izlietojat svešu varmāku labā,bieži vien kā pateicību saņemdami"boļševistisku kritiku"un"galvas mazgāšanu"par nepietiekoši lielām nelietībām.

Augstie partijas"sekretāri" saņem litera kartiņas,dzīvo pārpilnībā un brauc limuzīnos,kur vajadzīgi bendes un laupītāji,tur kā sunīšus pasvelpj jūs kā "padomju aktīvistus".Miljōi un aktīvisti ubaga skrandās un pēdējā skriešanā savu tautu apsmiet un izsūdzināt,bet varenie Maskavas tirāni un ģīdi tikai priecājās par jums,stulbie ģoji,kā viņi saka,ka esat lāti un uzticami vergu valsts"patrioti".

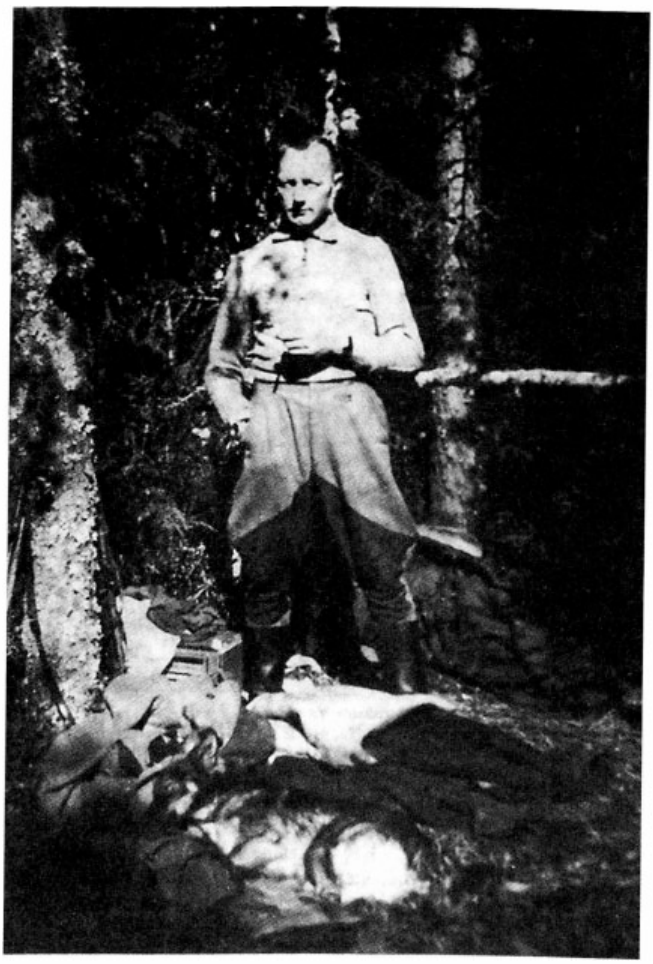
Apdomājat,ja jums vēl ir kaut cik smadzeņu,cik tālu tā varēsiet skriet un ko panākšiet?Vai domājat,ka tauta jūsu rīcību nerodz?Vērojiet starptautiskos notikumus,tad sapratīsat,ka boļševisma bojāeja nenovēršami tuvojās. Ko jums ir devis boļševiku režīms un kāda nozīme jūsu trakošanai-pārdomājiet.-

Apdomājiet,ko jūs atbildēsiet tiem latviešu tautas brāļiem,kuriem ar savām nelietībām liekat ciest.Latviešu tauta negrib naida un atriebības, bet vai tauta var mierīgi noskatīties uz jūsu asinssuņu darbu,vai var aizmirst - apdomājiet paši.LNPA dod jums iespēju laboties,nodēlojiet savu līdzšinējo kaitīgumos,pārtrauciet ķēdarus ar čekas varmāku režīmu un palīdziet tautai brīvības cīņas pēdējā posmā - tad jums tiks piedots.

DIEVS,SVĒTĪ LATVIJU.

Latvijas Nacionālo
Partizānu Apvienība.

Proclamation of the Latvian partisans in 1946



Pēteris Čevers, a partisan leader

Сов.Секретно 196

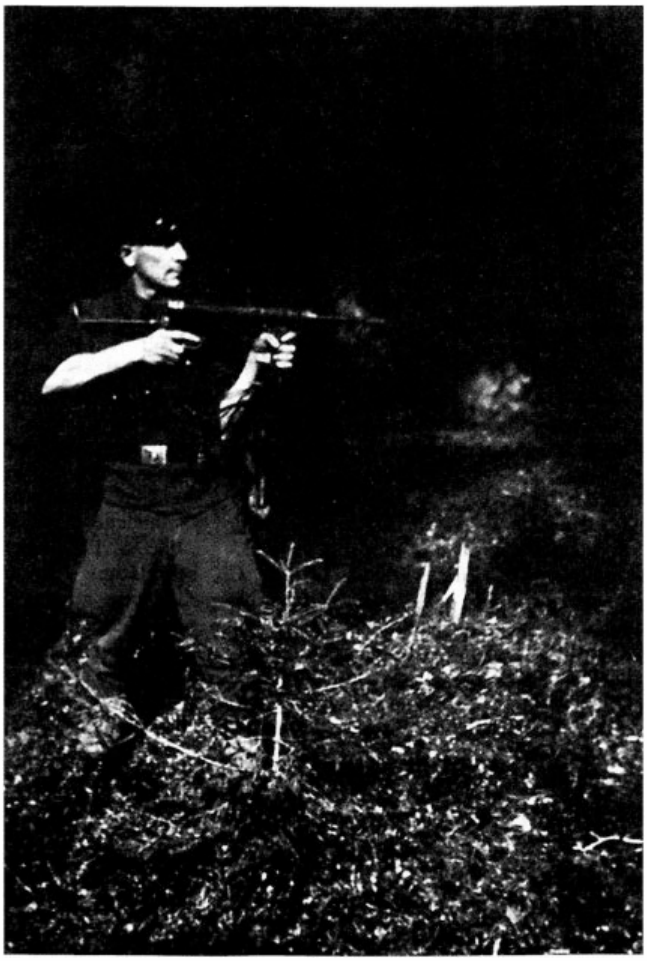
СПРАВКА

Приговор Военного Трибунала Прибалтийского Военного округа от 9.X.1951 года ,в отношении осужденного к ВМН- расстрелу -КЛУЦИС Яниса Карловича,1926 года рождения, уроженца Мадонского уезда ,Латвийской ССР приведен в исполнение 11.1.1952 года в гор.Риге.

ЗАМ.НАЧАЛЬНИКА ОТДЕЛА"А" МГБ
Латвийской ССР-Подполковник (ЕРБОВСКИЙ)

"16" февраля 1952 г.
гор.Рига.
тп-1

A secret note to certify that Janis Klucis' death sentence was carried out in 1952



Jāzeps Andžāns, the commander of the Mazā Jāņa partisan group

The Summer War: the 1941 Armed Resistance in Estonia

TIIT NOORMETS

The partisan war, as the most effective form of resistance, lasted for a few months in the summer of 1941, while the overall resistance movement emerged immediately after Estonia's occupation and the coup of 21 June 1940. At first resistance was an attempt to form a legal opposition. The puppet government established by the Soviet regime had declared the elections for a new parliament, the so-called People's Representative Assembly, for 14 and 15 July 1940, in order to provide the process of sovietisation with a legal basis. Representatives of former political parties and leaders of national and academic groups got together to organise candidates to stand against the official ones from the Töötava Rahva Liit (Union of Working People). In 66 constituencies out of 80 they succeeded in putting up 78 candidates, all of whom were removed: the submission tickets of 57 candidates were declared void, 20 withdrew their candidature themselves under the pressure of public and private threats, and one candidate was arrested.[1] The blocking of candidates to the elections destroyed any attempts to form a legal opposition. Spontaneous manifestations of opposition and demonstrations did not occur any more, for these, too, had resulted only in repressive measures. By the end of the summer of 1940 it was clear that only underground resistance was possible.

CIVIL RESISTANCE

Underground activities were mainly carried out by the younger generation. They were based on personal acquaintance and involved individuals who had not been public figures before the occupation. No state or social institution, which were all being dismantled at the time, had an organisational relationship with the resistance movement. Neither did the former public or military leadership, isolated from society by organised repression, take part in it. While the volunteer national defence organisation the Kaitseliit (Defence League), was disarmed on 17 and 19 June 1940, some of its members hid their arms, but this was only done by individuals, on a local level

and not everywhere. One exception was the efforts of some Estonian diplomats abroad who protested against the recognition of the Soviet occupation. This, however, had no direct effect on the course of events at home; Estonia was separated from the rest of the world by the Iron Curtain.[2] So the underground movement was led by people united by the fact that they had not been leading public figures before the occupation. On an ideological level, these people had in common their national identity and democratic ideals, which required that Estonia be restored as an independent state. The underground activities were not directly related to former parties and political forces and were not backed by one political tradition.

The underground movement was wide but lacked unity. Immediately after the attempt to form a legal opposition had failed, a group of its leaders tried to organise a nationwide body called the Päästekomitee (Rescue Committee) to unite all underground forces; this, however, did not succeed.

One of the groups that put up candidates for the July 1940 elections was the Eesti Rahvuslaste Klubi (Estonian National Club), banned already by that time. After the legal opposition had been quashed, one of its members, the lawyer Ülo Maramaa, initiated the Rescue Committee, an illegal organisation covering all the country. Its members intended to seize power and restore Estonia's independence at the outbreak of the Soviet-German war on the withdrawal of the Red Army. An old idea in Estonian political thought, dating back to the previous century, an Estonian-Finnish federation, was discussed at meetings of this committee. The idea, however, had always been a remote one and did not develop into a goal of the underground organisation. The committee became the core of the organisation, which looked for people who shared their views and established contacts with them.

By the end of 1940 there existed a subsidiary organisation in Tallinn. Representatives were appointed for six out of 11 Estonian districts, Virumaa, Viljandimaa, Järvamaa, Saaremaa, Pärnumaa and Valgamaa, where local organisations were formed. In addition, a youth organisation was set up. Although the committee had succeeded in establishing a widespread underground network, the organisation as a whole was still in the process of being formed. Its main purpose was to increase and organise its membership, prepare for a state of emergency and encourage passive resistance. Taking into account the actual correlation of forces, active manifestations were planned for only after the with-

drawal of the Red Army at the outbreak of war. In order to seize power in Tallinn, detailed plans were drawn up on how to take over vital civilian institutions and restore their operation, how to avoid anarchy and defend the people. The building up of an arsenal and preparations for sabotage on the railways were begun. With the help of Estonian exiles in Finland, the committee had set up radio communication with Finnish intelligence and had made some contacts with Germans via the German diplomatic mission in Tallinn.

By the end of 1940 the Soviet security service had learnt about the committee and destroyed its centre which, of course, paralysed the formation of local district organisations.[2] In the interests of secrecy no more attempts were made to set up another nationwide resistance organisation.

At the same time many new resistance organisations were formed. In spite of the systematic Soviet security service operations, they could not halt the growth of the resistance movement. By the summer of 1941 underground groups of like-minded people had grown up all over Estonia. They were all quite similar and shared the following traits:

1. underground organisations were small groups, their field of action was local
2. members had legal status (illegal persons hiding from the Soviet regime acted, as a rule, on their own)
3. contacts between groups were minimal and it is not possible to speak of an organised national resistance network
4. the main activity was gathering and disseminating information
5. no organised or intentional preparation for a guerrilla war was made by these groups.

The main goal of the civilian resistance movement was to join forces, and its main method was counter-propaganda. This, under the conditions of total Soviet secrecy and brainwashing prevalent in Estonia, acquired the status of a war of information. Out of these numerous resistance groups, two are conspicuous for their effectiveness and persistence: the group attached to the Museum of Health Care, and the secret groups of the Võru district.

The Museum of Health Care group gathered in Tartu in September 1940 as a four-member group of anticommunist friends who set themselves the goal of obtaining all available information about internal as well as foreign policy. They also sought contacts with other resistance groups in Estonia as well as with anti-Soviet forces abroad. According to the prevailing mood among the people,

they tried, besides other things, to get internal information about the Communist Party and security which was then passed on to other underground groups. By the spring of 1941 the group comprised approximately 20 members and had developed into the resistance organisation of the students of Tartu University, acting under the cover of the Estonian Museum of Health Care (two members of the group were the director of the museum and his secretary). In March 1941 the group stepped up its activities: plans were prepared to defend the city in war, contacts with other resistance groups and people both in Tallinn and the Tartu district were tightened, and some members of the group set up smaller independent fighting units. The group at the Museum of Health Care was the biggest and most militant of the groups in Tartu (its most active members were reserve officers with military training). In addition, none of its members were arrested or deported, so the group became a co-ordinating centre for the resistance movement in Tartu. The revolt that broke out in Tartu on 10 July 1941 took its leaders from the group at the Museum of Health Care.[4]

In the Võru district the former members of the Defence League[5] had put forward the idea of the need for an armed organisation as early as the autumn of 1940. In October and November the first small local groups were formed. By the next spring these covered the whole district; there was no central organisation or information network, however, that connected these cells closely. As arrests and deportations began, most of the cells lost their leaders – former commanders of the Defence League at a platoon or company level – while most of the ordinary members hid in the forests after the 14 June 1941 deportations, and began the guerrilla war. The organisation, which was not discovered by the Soviet security service because of its absolute secrecy, spread extensively immediately after the outbreak of the war, for they were made up of elderly men and young men under conscription age who were not forced by the mobilisation order to hide in the forests. Their main aim was, if the need arose, to defend their homes and families against the plundering and burning by the retreating Red Army and its reprisal squads, for which they formed groups in villages, procured arms and exchanged information. Men with legal status and jobs were to undertake action only if necessary; contingency plans and communication schemes were drafted. All in all, there were 30 such cells in the Võru district, comprising 430 men, fewer than half of them with guns.[6] No other district had such a large secret organisation.

The outward signs of resistance in this period were leaflets and their distribution, the hoisting of the national flag (e.g., in 1941, on the anniversary of the founding of the Republic of Estonia, on 24 February, the blue, black and white national flag flew all over the country), and the flowers laid at the sites of destroyed monuments commemorating the War of Independence. Two exceptional parts of this general picture are the illegal contact of some Estonians with Finnish intelligence, and, from March 1941, the training of a group of Estonian scouts by the Finns.[7]

THE BEGINNING OF ARMED RESISTANCE

The first known Forest Brother, as the Estonian guerrillas came to be called, was Enn Murulaid. This young man from the village of Arumäe in the Alutaguse area in the district of Viru deserted the army in September 1940 when the former Estonian armed forces were united with the Red Army, and hid in the forests near his home until the guerrilla war broke out. Later he joined a large and active guerrilla group that had been formed there.[8] As Soviet repressions deepened, the number of people who went underground increased. On 12 June 1941 several men from the Antsla area in the district of Võru were summoned for interrogation, and they all, instead of obeying, decided to hide in the forest, thus laying the foundations for a guerrilla troop that formed after the outbreak of the war.[9] Hiding, however, was not common; for a law-abiding citizen, used to life in a lawful state, it would be an almost insurmountable psychological obstacle. As the writer Karl-August Hindrey put it well, going underground meant assuming the "status of a hunted beast". In the middle of June 1941, a week before the outbreak of the Soviet-German war, there were a few illegal individuals or small illegal groups, but one cannot speak of guerrilla activity or armed resistance in Estonia at the time. All this changed overnight after 14 June when more than 10,000 people were deported to prison camps or exile in Siberia. This unprecedented action, going against the legal precepts prevalent in people's minds,[10] terrorised everybody and was immediately followed by a mass flight from homes. The widespread underground population was born, hiding mostly in forests, looking for arms, and preparing for organised action.

New forces were added to the first wave of Forest Brothers as the Soviet repressions, directed against all layers of society, intensified:

- the 22nd Riflemen's Corps, based on the former Estonian armed forces, were moved out of Estonia
- the mobilisation of conscripts began in early July
- conscription continued in late July and August

The policy of terror culminated in the establishment of special battalions which were given a free hand in "anti-bandit combat", and on 5 July were given the right to shoot "bandits" on the spot without a trial or investigation, a development which threatened, of course, the life of every single person.[11]

Immediately after the outbreak of war Estonian soldiers began to flee from their bases, a movement which became widespread at the end of June when the 22nd Riflemen's Corps were removed to Russia. As a rule it happened singly or in small groups. The general exodus was hindered by the fact that in the two previous weeks the former Estonian units had been filled with recruits from Russia. In spite of that, organised desertions from some units, even units as large as platoons, or most of the officers, did take place; in this way 38 air force officers from the corps' aviation squadron fled. It was easier to escape from northern Estonia; units based in southern Estonia were taken out of the country on foot, without ammunition and under direct surveillance. The commissioned and noncommissioned officers and soldiers who had fled to the forests formed the core and the organising force of the armed resistance. In northern Estonia there were 450 to 550 fighters, in the south somewhat fewer. From unconfirmed data the total figure of servicemen participating in the guerrilla war at this point could be estimated at around 700.[12] It is important to remember also the two deserters from the Red Army who joined the guerrillas in Hiiumaa: the Finn Mikko Pentikäinen and the Karelian Ilo Sokolov.[13]

In addition to the servicemen who deserted from the Red Army, all the border guards on the Estonian SSR-Latvian SSR border joined the resistance movement. The border guards of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Estonian SSR were actually the remnants of the Border Guard of the Republic of Estonia, formed solely of Estonians. Although they were few in number – fewer than 100 men – their contribution was considerable. Commissioned and noncommissioned officers took part in leading the guerrilla forces in the areas around the southern border. Small units of border guards with their military training, good arms and better organisation compared to the majority of guerrillas, were a conspicuous force in the guerrilla war.[14]

The recruitment of Estonian men into the Red Army began in early July, mostly from 2 to 4 July. It covered the whole country and was not a success. It was followed by the conscription of reservists, begun on 22 July, which lasted in different districts, concerning at different times and stages different ages and categories of reservists, until 24 August. As by mid-July the front line had reached the Emajõgi-Pärnu line in central Estonia, conscription could only be carried out in northern Estonia and on the islands. It was in some ways more successful than recruiting, for the authorities were able to exercise power in the rear of the Red Army better. (The Soviet Criminal Code enacted in Estonia made liable the family members of a person who did not obey a summons.) Based on official Soviet data, 32,187 Estonian men joined the Red Army. Most documents were destroyed at the time of the evacuation of Tallinn, but the figure is thought to be between 32,000 and 33,000 men (in addition to a few thousand evacuated men, including those from destroyer battalions).[15] Men moved out of Estonia this way formed about a third of the 110,000-man reserve in the Republic of Estonia before the occupation. Most did not obey their orders or escaped from stations or trains on the way to Russia; some were saved from ships damaged in action. These men were forced to stay in hiding, as a result of which the Forest Brother movement became very large.

Thus, the concept of Forest Brothers covers all the people who were in hiding from the Soviet regime, mostly by escaping into the forests. It can be called a mass phenomenon. "These days bogs and forests are more populated than farms and fields. As the saying goes, the forests and bogs are our territory while the fields and farms are occupied by the enemy. Defence groups are emerging everywhere," wrote the writer Juhan Jaik in 1941.[16] His words express the essence of what was going on at the time: forces were being assembled to improve defence. Some Forest Brothers gathered in groups, acquiring what weapons they could, developing their military leadership with the necessary organisation and discipline: refugees became guerrilla units (Table 1).

The process was continuous and, depending on the situation in the war and the location of the front line, its development in different parts of Estonia was different. The pattern, however, was the same.

A guerrilla war requires several elements which determine its success. Of the utmost importance are:

Table 1

Number of Estonian guerrillas and casualties (per district)[36]

District	Guerrillas	Percentage of population	Casualties
Petseri	34	0.05	9
Võru	974	1.2	10
Valga	324	0.8	2
Pärnu	~1,100	1.2	40
Viljandi	~700	0.9	68
Tartu	1,500*	0.9	154
Järva	1,000*	1.7	58
Viru	<4,400	2.9	162
Harju	1,000*	0.5 (except Tallinn 1.1)	16
Lääne	~800	1.1	35
Saare	>100	0.2	7
Total	~12,000	1.1	561

* Estimates (data from 1942 and 1943 concerning the districts of Tartu, Järva and Harju is not available and the number of guerrillas has been estimated by the author on the basis of known guerrillas in some areas, larger guerrilla units, etc.)

- the mass support of the indigenous population
- the efficient organisation and command of guerrilla forces
- the existence of a shared political goal and programme
- foreign aid
- arms and military equipment (or regular supplies of them)

In the Estonian Summer War the first three conditions were there. The population on the whole was hostile to the Soviet regime, supporting the resistance movement at least passively. The actions of the regime forced people into defence and caused the emergence of mass guerrilla forces. They were not well prepared but that fact was compensated for by the presence of able leadership. This came mostly from among the former leaders of the Defence League, for the regime could not destroy so numerous a group altogether; besides, there were the reserve officers trained before the occupation and the servicemen who had fled to the forests at the outbreak of the war. They all saw their goal as saving their own lives and those of their fellow countrymen and women. The restoration of Estonia's independence under the direct threat of death was a distant and abstract aim but, still, so evident that it needed no separate programme for those who fought in the ranks of the resistance forces.

The last two requirements, however, were missing. The armed resistance movement got at first no help whatsoever from anywhere. (In spite of the prevalent misconception about guerrilla wars, not a single guerrilla war in history has been won without external help.) From a general point of view, of course, the arrival of the Wehrmacht in Estonia, which changed decisively the military situation, has to be treated as foreign aid. During the struggle in the Red Army rear in northern Estonia arms were brought from Finland by air; southern Estonian guerrillas received a few cases of arms from German units in Latvia or from the Latvian side; but this was such insignificant help that it did not change the overall position of the guerrilla forces.

The lack of arms was the main problem for the Estonian guerrillas, which determined directly the character of their actions. (In the Viru district only every third partisan had weapons by the end of the guerrilla war.[17]) Only a few units were fully armed; in general, a third of or half the fighters had weapons. A large group of unarmed refugees would sometimes seek refuge with a small but well-armed group and the camp would number a couple of hundred members. At the beginning of the war the Forest Brothers all over Estonia could only muster about a thousand rifles, taken by deserters or hidden at the time of the liquidation of the Defence League a year before; all other arms – hunting guns, small arms acquired in the period of revolution and war between 1917 and 1920, etc – were usually of little use in action and, besides, only a few of the Forest Brothers possessed them. Paradoxically, it was the lack of arms that prompted attacks, for arms enabled defence, and in order to get them guerrillas had to attack district offices, policemen and units of the Red Army. These trophies strengthened the guerrilla forces and enabled them to continue on a larger scale. The shortage of arms forced them to adopt aggressive tactics.

The outbreak of the Soviet-German war on 22 June 1941 brought the Forest Brothers into the action too. On that day a Red Army unit was attacked in the district of Harju where Arnold Väljamäe, a young man of 16, summoned a group of eight men near the Paldiski Red Army base and opened fire on army lorries on the road.[18] At the beginning of the war the Forest Brothers were still engaged in preparations, but by early July they were ready to take the offensive, attacking district offices and several towns with the aim of seizing power. The course of the guerrilla war was directly related to the situation on the front line. The armed resistance began as a guerrilla war: the

guerrillas disrupted communications, eradicated collaborators and smaller enemy units, liquidated local authorities, organised sudden attacks on superior forces and outmanoeuvred retaliation. Guerrillas disrupted the Soviet rear in order to prevent mobilisation and other actions jeopardising people's lives as well as the requisition of their property. "The first aim of the Forest Brothers, to protect their own lives and also their families and property, was soon replaced by more general goals as their numbers increased and more arms were obtained. Everywhere, as far as was possible, Forest Brothers caused disruption in the rear of the Red Army: communication networks were destroyed; bridges were blown up; conscripts were lured away into the forests; the requisition of cattle and horses was obstructed; Red Army soldiers and policemen were attacked on the roads; houses were burned down; traffic was delayed by placing nails, barbed wire or glass on the road."[19] The guerrilla war soon developed into regular action with the aim of defending the liberated territories: guerrilla groups became organised groups of armed people, also forming regular military units which fought alongside the Germans until the end of the military action in Estonia.

SOUTHERN ESTONIA

After its defeat at Riga on 2 July 1941, the Red Army retreated through northern Latvia and southern Estonia to the new Tartu-Pärnu defence line in central Estonia, while the German forces halted their advance temporarily. As a consequence, there was a no-man's-land in southern Estonia. On this territory two forces, without significant support from the regulars, faced each other: hastily organised guerrillas and Soviet hit squads. The first half of July was a period of open combat between them. Since 3 July the guerrillas had been gradually taking over local institutions and defending liberated territories, with dozens of men killed in action on both sides. In liberated areas the volunteer military organisation, the Home Guards, built on the pre-occupation Defence League, was immediately set up and soon increased in number (by August the southern Estonian Home Guards comprised 14,000 men).

On 10 July a spontaneous revolt broke out in Tartu which the Red Army was not able to suppress. Within two days Estonian officers who had fled from the Red Army formed the first military unit, the Tartu guerrilla battalion, which, together with Home Guard troops from all over southern Esto-

nia which had come to help Tartu, dug in on a line along the River Emajõgi.[20] The first German units crossed the Estonian border on 7 July. They entered an already liberated territory, with a restored legal municipal government, defended by armed people. The Estonian Home Guards and German front line units, on the basis of their common interests, soon established relations that were in principle those of allies. Believing that the withdrawal of the Red Army from southern Estonia was a general retreat towards Leningrad, the German army had sent only weak forces after them. In fact, the Red Army was at that time receiving continuous replacements and the German advance was stopped in central Estonia where the front line stayed for a fortnight. Estonian volunteers stepped in on this line beside the German forces. Between 10 and 29 July, next to the Wehrmacht units on the right flank of the front line on the River Emajõgi, were 1,500 Home Guard men from southern Estonia (under the command of Major Vask) and the 1,000 men of the Tartu battalion (commanded by Captain Talpak). On the left flank of the front line in the Pärnu district the Pärnu Home Guards kept approximately 500 men until August.[21]

By the end of July the German army had brought reinforcements, it broke through the Red Army line and continued its offensive with violent battles towards northern Estonia. At this time German police and administrative authorities reached Estonia too, and were surprised by the existence of armed resistance forces which came as unpleasant news. The German leadership had no policy for managing these forces. After the front line receded behind Tartu, a guerrilla parade with 2,000 participants took place on 29 July, at the end of which the German authorities declared that the Estonian military forces would be disarmed and disbanded. In early August, however, the Home Guards were decreed legal again. The decision was a consequence of the military capability of the German army: fierce resistance by the Red Army had hindered the Germans in their advance and it needed to protect its rear from the Red Army soldiers left behind. The latter was to become the task of the Home Guards. A characteristic of the German policy, however, was that at the same time they confiscated mechanical transport, automatic weapons and funds from the Home Guards, taking them (and in this they were right) not to be a band of collaborators but people under arms. During the Summer War, Home Guard units had 426 armed encounters with the Red Army, in which 151 men were lost.[22]

ESTONIAN UNITS AND FIGHTING GROUPS ON THE FRONT LINE

The principal aim of the resistance movement at the time of hostilities was to liberate Estonia as quickly as possible from the Red Army, to avoid an increase in the number of victims and to save property from the enemy's "scorched earth" tactics. In this respect, cooperation with the German armed forces was only natural, and expressed itself in the numerous volunteers joining the struggle (Table 2). At the beginning of the offensive in the north in early August, three independent Estonian battalions were formed, in agreement with the commanders of German units, which fought together with the German armed forces against the Red Army.

The nucleus of the Erna battalion was formed at the beginning of the war outside Estonia. On 23 June 1941, within the framework of a Finnish-Ger-

Table 2

Larger Estonian front line units[37]

Name	Commander	Time of action	Place of action	Size
Erna	Colonel Henn-Ants Kurg (from Aug 28 Major Raimond Hindpere)	22 June – 10 Oct	Finland – Harju and Saare districts	445
Tartu Guerrilla Battalion	Captain Karl Talpak	12–29 July	Tartu and its environs	~1,000
South Estonian Home Guard units	Major August Vask	10–29 July	The front line on the River Emajõgi between Lake Peipsi and Lake Võrtsjärvup	1,500
Volunteer Company of Captain Talpak	Captain Karl Talpak	10 Aug – 5 Sept	Järva and Harju districts	< 300
Landing unit of Lieutenant Loodus	Lieutenant Leopold Loodus	Early Sept –2 Nov	West Estonian islands	121 (+ 59 boats)
Spearhead troop of Saaremaa Home Guard	Sergeant Major M. Rahula	22 Sept – 6 Oct	Saare district	~100
Pärnumaa Home Guard	Wehrmacht Colonel Hippler	July – August	Front line in Pärnu district	~500
Major Hirvelaan Battalion	Major Hans Hirvelaan (from Aug 20 Major Aleksander Kitsapea)	3 Aug – 10 Sept	Järva and Harju districts	~ 300

man joint intelligence operation, Major Aksel Kristian, the Estonian military attaché in Helsinki, who after Estonia's occupation in 1940 had stayed in exile, formed in Helsinki a 65-man group of Estonian refugees called Erna, including 15 young men who had been trained as radio operators on Finnish courses. The group leader was Colonel Henn-Ants Kurg, the last Estonian military attaché in Paris. Lieutenant Reinhardt was appointed Abwehr liaison officer, and Major Kristian, after the group had been launched, remained as commander of the communication centre in Helsinki. On the evening of 10 July 1941, Erna landed in Estonia: 42 men dug in in the bogs and forests near the settlement of Kautla on the border of the districts of Harju and Järva. On 28 July, 17 more men made a parachute landing. Six men parachuted in two-man patrol units in Harjumaa, Virumaa and Saaremaa, where they separated from the main group and gathered data independently behind the front line until the territory was taken by the Germans. Their instructions limited the Erna battalion to reconnaissance only. After getting to know the situation on the ground, however, the group, on its own initiative, joined the resistance movement, organising the Forest Brothers, and the Kautla camp became the centre (around 2,000 Forest Brothers in a 200-square-kilometre area). In a series of engagements on 31 July and 1 August, known as the battle of Kautla, they repelled the enemy, which enabled the primary forces of the camp to break the siege. On 4 August the Erna men received an order to halt their activity in the enemy's rear and cross the front line. Later, a single battalion was formed, known as Erna II, comprising volunteers from Järvamaa and Tartu, which was one of the strongest units (made up of three infantry companies, a mine thrower, a heavy machine gun and logistic sub-units with 24 officers, 33 noncommissioned officers and 350 privates). The battalion participated in the offensive at Tallinn. After the seizure of Tallinn on 28 August it was complemented by men from the islands. In September the battalion took part in the landings on the west Estonian islands and the battles to seize them. On 27 September Erna was sent back to Tallinn and on 10 October was disbanded by the German authorities. Altogether Erna lost 32 men (either killed or missing in action). In 1944, on the initiative of its members, attempts were made to create an intelligence network for the Estonian resistance movement. Some members of the group fought in the Finnish Jatkusota (Sequel War). The Erna group

has become a legendary symbol of the Estonian resistance movement, and as such it has until now been the target of the most fierce ideological attacks.[23]

The formation of the volunteer company of Karl Talpak began after the 2 August decree of the German army command which permitted the restoration of the Home Guards. Major F. Kurg, commander of the liberated territories in Estonia, appointed the former leader of the Tartu guerrilla battalion, Captain Talpak, as commander of a section of operations in northern Estonia with the task of organising the Home Guards and security in the rear. Talpak carried out his duty in the districts of Järva and Viru, forming a company of volunteers named after him. As the volunteers were numerous, it almost grew into a motorised battalion with its own artillery (more than 200 men from southern Estonia, and 100 men from the local Home Guards during the offensive at Tallinn). The company wore the uniforms of the Estonian armed forces which they got from former Estonian army depots in southern Estonia. From 10 August the unit took part in the seizure of Tallinn, moving close to the city with the operation. After a disagreement with the Germans who wanted to send the disciplined and efficient unit to the Leningrad front, the Talpak company was disbanded by the German army on 5 September and its members attached to the local Home Guards.[24]

The formation of the Hirvelaan Battalion, under the name the First Estonian Volunteer Battalion, by Major Hans Hirvelaan of the Järva district guerrillas, started on 3 August. The battalion included staff, two infantry companies, a heavy machine gun unit, a liaison detachment and a baggage train; a large number of its officers were airmen who, at the outbreak of the war, had escaped from the Red Army. From 4 August they were posted on the front line, participating also in action near Rapla, where on 20 August an enemy sniper killed Major Hirvelaan. The battalion participated in the offensive at Tallinn, and after the city's seizure brought up the rear and guarded the coast in the northwest of Estonia. The battalion was disbanded on 10 September. (One company, at the head of which was Captain Johannes Kant, stayed with the 3rd Battalion of the 1st Regiment of the 217th Wehrmacht Division until 8 November keeping guard on western Estonian islands and the coastline.) Of this battalion, 27 men were killed in action. In recognition of the services of Major Hirvelaan to his country, the disbandment decree named the battalion the Major Hirvelaan Battalion.[25]

Alongside these bigger units, several smaller temporary ones took part in engagements; there were individuals and smaller groups who joined the German forces directly. The German 504th and 505th Infantry Regiments both included approximately 100 to 150 Estonians. Volunteers took part in military action in almost all major assaults by the Germans in central and northern Estonia. The volunteers in General Friedrich's combat group were the first to enter Tallinn and participated in the seizure of the Estonian seat of power, Dome Hill.[26] Estonian and German military units included altogether more than 4,000 Estonian volunteers, 107 of whom were killed in action. The participation of volunteers in combat within the ranks of the German forces proceeded from their common interests at the time. The commanders of the resistance movement and the local forces of the Wehrmacht developed relations as allies, for both parties were interested in driving the Red Army out as quickly as possible. The seizure of Tallinn on 28 August with the participation of Estonian volunteer units, however, also resulted in most of these being disbanded by the German army command.

NORTHERN ESTONIA AND THE ISLANDS

Until the end of August, northern Estonia was behind the front line, with its resistance movement determined by the high concentration of Red Army forces. In the "Tallinn bag" formed in August, i.e. at the chief naval base of the Baltic fleet in Tallinn in northwest Estonia, almost 80,000 soldiers were based – one to every three local civilians. Guerrilla attacks in early July which aimed to seize authority failed, of course, due to the imbalance of forces and, until the front line moved, the Forest Brothers, facing superior numbers, had to limit themselves to guerrilla warfare. As the guerrilla resistance continued, the number of Forest Brothers increased quickly, exceeding considerably that of the southern Estonian forces. In several places base camps with two hundred or more inhabitants developed. The biggest of these centres was the abovementioned Kautla camp, formed by the Erna group, with almost 2,000 people. Its final organisation, however, remained incomplete and the camp was abandoned in early August because of Soviet offensives.

As an example of a base camp we could mention the unit situated in the district of Harju. Colonel Ernst Leithammel, hiding in the Kohila area in Harjumaa to avoid being deported again, succeeded in evading the Red Army

and went into the forests where the first groups gathered in the region of the Mahtra moors in early July. On 28 July all the groups united under the command of Colonel Leithammel, who organised a unit called the Harju Malev (Harju Unit) comprising approximately 250 men, only 40 of them armed. The unit undertook military training, including courses on the production of hand grenades and mines. Because of their poor arms they did not go into action, but all attacks on the base, however, were repelled. When on 8 August the front line reached the region, the unit joined the German armed forces and part of it participated in the offensive at Tallinn. Colonel Leithammel, proceeding from an agreement made with the commander of the 217th Wehrmacht Division, acted as rear area commander, organising the Home Guards, municipal authorities and the police.[27]

Some base camps managed to hide from the adversary throughout the guerrilla war, sending smaller units out into the regions far from their headquarters. Others had to move several times, were broken up into smaller groups or became mobile units. Of the latter, the most remarkable was the Rakvere Region Defence Battalion, formed in late July by uniting several guerrilla groups. It included 155 Forest Brothers, 96 of them armed. Together with other refugees who joined the battalion, the unit comprised more than 200 persons. The battalion was organised and commanded like a regular army unit, with its own horse and motor transport. The latter enabled the battalion after its discovery by the enemy to manoeuvre and engage in action without suffering heavy casualties.[28]

Although numerous and quite well organised, the guerrillas, compared to their adversary, were weak and unable to liberate their territory on their own. Moreover, in northern Estonia the Soviet shock troops were supported by the Red Army. As the front line approached, the guerrillas came out of the forests and, alongside German forces, took part in the action, organising units of Home Guards. Often officers of the south Estonian Home Guards directed the procedure.

After the German forces had occupied northern Estonia, by the end of August, only the islands of west Estonia and the mighty Moonsund fortifications remained under the control of the Red Army. There the concentration of Red Army forces was especially high. On Saaremaa, Muhumaa and Hiiumaa there were 25,000 soldiers, or approximately one to two or three civilians.

This limited the resistance movement: the Forest Brothers were considerably less numerous on the islands than on the continent and they engaged in just a few isolated actions. In the October operation to seize the islands, alongside the German forces, the Erna battalion also took part. The new Estonian units were organised within the framework of the operation. Staff and the first units of the islands' Home Guards were formed on the continent prior to the landing. These were composed of islanders arrested and mobilised by the Soviet regime who had succeeded in escaping one way or another, mostly during the evacuation of the Red Army from Tallinn when ships were either bombed or run aground by their Estonian crews. Together with the German forces, they made their way to the islands, taking part in the action and securing the rear while their ranks increased (the biggest unit was the spearhead of the Saaremaa Home Guard which was the size of a company). A mention must be made of the landing unit formed of Estonian fishermen and their boats under the command of Estonian naval officers. These boats made up almost 20 per cent of the craft in the landings on the west Estonian islands.[29]

On 29 October warfare on Estonian territory came to an end and the last Estonian units were disbanded. Under the German occupation the hope prevalent at that time for the restoration of independence after the defeat of the Red Army turned out to be fiction. An attempt to restore the armed forces, which was to be a step towards independence, would not have been successful either. The security units formed from volunteers by commanders in the German rear and the police from the end of August (the later Police and East Battalions) were clearly part of the German armed forces.

The Estonian armed forces in the period of the German occupation were replaced by the volunteer armed Home Guards organisation, formed by the resistance movement, which developed as an organisation and increased in number (Table 3). At the end of 1941 the Home Guards included more than 42,000 men, while its paid staff was composed of Estonian officers who had survived Soviet reprisals. Popular support for the Home Guards is understandable, for it was approved of as an institution of independence, not to mention its necessary role as the guarantor of personal security and protector of property. (The submission of the Home Guards to German authority is another wide-ranging subject which has not been researched yet.) At first the Home Guards, which had been formed spontaneously, lacked a common struc-

Table 3

Estonian Home Guard Membership[38]

District	1 August 1941	1 October 1941	1 December 1941
Pärnu	1,737	3,380	4,167
Valga	517	568	988
Viljandi	1,251	3,734	4,109
Petseri	941	1,005	903
Tartu	5,360	8,527	6,851
Võru	4,307	1,058	1,195
Järva	617	3,280	3,362
Viru	-	6,580	7,490
Narva (city)	-	874	1,055
Tallinn (city)	-	1,225	1,198
Lääne	-	2,885	4,015
Harju	-	5,729	5,833
Saare	-	1,438	1,637
Total	14,730	40,283	42,803

ture and central direction. Units of Home Guards in southern Estonia were formed during the guerrilla war; in the north it happened mostly after the front line had receded, first on a village level and later centralised into district organisations. It was not until 22 September 1941 that the Estonian Police and Home Guard Authority was set up, which established its organisational structure and budget. The formation of the Home Guards as a military organisation covering the whole country, without any central regulations or planning but rather on a grassroots level, is a remarkable achievement in the context of world military history.

Where Estonia was occupied by the German forces, military action did not stop immediately, for the lack of forces prevented the Wehrmacht from annihilating the Red Army units that had been left behind. In August large Red Army groups north of Tartu moved through southeastern Estonia to the Pskov region, with the aim of reaching Russia. In September similar units, left behind after the fall of Tallinn on 28 August, moved through northern Estonia. Some of these units had several hundred men and their goal was to cross the River Narva in order to get to Russia. Besides the Republican Defence Committee of the Estonian SSR, the Red Army had left behind a wide underground intelligence and diversion agency, as well as guerrilla units which were reinforced with

new resources in the autumn of 1941. All autumn the Home Guards were engaged in action against these forces: the scale and the violence of these encounters sometimes exceeded that of the guerrilla war. The Home Guards were to control the situation all over Estonia and their efficiency was remarkable. By the end of 1941 they had organised 5,033 raids, taking prisoner 20,989 Red Army soldiers and 5,646 Soviet partisans and intelligence agents. By February 1942, 498 Home Guard men had been killed in action and 483 wounded.[30] In addition, every day thousands of men on sentry duty were sent out, to watch over transport, communications, industrial plants and prison camps.

SUMMING UP

It is impossible to determine the exact numbers of the Forest Brothers. The total size of the organised and at least partly armed guerrilla forces in Estonia was approximately 12,000 men, 561 of whom were killed in action (Table 1). As has been mentioned already, the Forest Brothers were largely people in hiding from the repressive Soviet authorities; in the summer of 1941 the phenomenon was widespread. In the district of Viljandi, from 4,000 to 5,000 people, besides the 700 guerrillas, withdrew for a period. In the district of Viru, 4,400 guerrillas were reinforced by about 5,000 people. In different districts the number of guerrillas differed greatly, varying from the 34 men active in the district of Petseri and fewer than a hundred in the district of Saare, to more than 4,400 men in Virumaa. The numerical diversity can be better understood by considering the ratio of guerrillas to the population in different regions.

Guerrillas made up 1.1 per cent of the Estonian population, which can be treated as a standard in modern guerrilla wars. (In the Vietnam War in 1965–1972 the Vietcong forces, North Vietnam regular units excluded, were 0.5 to one per cent of the South Vietnamese population; during the Afghanistan War between 1979 and 1989 different guerrilla forces made up one to two per cent of the population). In southern Estonia there were all in all about 4,500 guerrillas, or approximately one per cent of the population (the Petseri district excluded). In northern Estonia the guerrilla war lasted for a few months longer and therefore the number of guerrillas was higher: about 7,500 men, or 1.7 per cent of the population (Tallinn excluded). The relatively large number of guerrillas in the districts of Viru and Järva can be explained by both the favourable natural environment (forests covered one third of Virumaa and about

a quarter of Järvamaa) as well as the presence of the Tallinn-Narva railway line from where Estonian servicemen and conscripts escaped into the forests. The exceptionally low number of guerrillas in other districts, in Petserimaa, Harjumaa (Tallinn included) and Saaremaa, can also be explained:

- The majority of the population in the district of Petseri were Russians who, as a rule, were hostile to the resistance movement. This hostile element was well organised by a local battalion, the People's Commissariat for State Security, by border guard units of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union, and the Young Communist League, thus forming an anti-resistance environment.
- More than half the population of the Harju district lived in the capital, Tallinn, which, after the defeat at Liepaja immediately at the outbreak of the war, became the chief base for the Soviet Baltic fleet. This meant the presence of far superior military forces and checkpoints which made it practically impossible to get out of the city, so that people could hide in Tallinn only alone or in very small groups.
- In the district of Saare the Moonsund Fortified Region, the main part of the Soviet coastal defence, was situated, and there too, as in Tallinn, military forces were abundant.[31] To engage in combat with these would have meant suicide for the almost unarmed resistance movement. Besides, the flat terrain of Saaremaa, with only a few small woods, was not suitable for hiding. (According to statistics, in 1940, 20.6 per cent of Estonia was covered with woods, while in Saaremaa the percentage was only seven per cent; for comparison, at present 47 per cent of Estonia is forested.)

The total number of combatants in the Summer War was considerably higher than the number of Forest Brothers. Up to the end of the war it included 33,569 men in the Home Guards, 2,284 in Estonian military units and 2,000 in the Wehrmacht (making up altogether 50 per cent of 20 to 34-year-old male citizens).[32] The total casualties known by name, or missing guerrillas, Home Guards and volunteers was 819. (The real number was probably somewhat higher for the character of guerrilla war excludes exact records.) In comparison, the Germans deployed about 80,000 men in Estonia, of whom 4,600 were killed in action.

The exact number of battles fought by the guerrillas is not known either, for a 1942–1943 survey organised by the Home Guards did not record smaller

actions. For example, in Läänemaa, in the period between 22 June and 25 August, a 48-man group of Oru Forest Brothers existed, about which we now have only general information: "They saved the neighbouring villages from burning down, caused panic behind Red Army lines by arresting soldiers and firing at smaller units moving on roads." In the district of Lääne there were 31 active guerrilla units about which we now have only similar vague reports giving no details.[33] In Virumaa, the guerrilla forces, which formed one third of the total of Estonian guerrilla units, recorded 167 armed conflicts, including 40 regular battles.[34] Later, the total number of armed conflicts for the guerrillas in Virumaa is said to have been 282.[35]

Armed resistance emerged spontaneously without outward initiatives or support, without any direct preparation, having no common organisation or central direction. It developed quickly from guerrilla activity into a general public war against the Soviet regime involving the whole of Estonian society, for the Soviet regime with its violent methods affected everybody. Ever-increasing Soviet intimidation prompted people to join the forces engaged in the resistance movement and made it become more active. Armed resistance was a reaction to the repressive measures of the occupying authorities and was carried out by people who escaped to the forests to hide from the danger threatening them. In short, it was the instinct for self-preservation that motivated the armed resistance and was its driving force, triggered by the shock which followed the mass deportations.

One of the biggest changes that came about within only a year of the imposition of the Soviet regime was the replacement of the image of Germans as oppressors of 700 years by one which saw them as liberators (not to mention the fact that it was probably the first time in Estonian history that people generally were literally waiting for the war). The mood expressed by the jubilant welcome of Wehrmacht soldiers or the act of fighting shoulder to shoulder against the common enemy, however, had no suggestion of sharing Nazi ideas or wishing to collaborate in Nazi policy. The political and cultural orientation towards Western-style democracy formed during the period of independence has been preserved until today; in 1940 and 1941, however, Estonia was isolated from the West and in order to preserve itself relied instinctively on Germany as the only real military force that could oppose the Soviet Union.

In Estonia in 1941 a full-scale war went on between the Red Army and the Wehrmacht. The Estonian resistance movement accompanied it with its own war but with different aims and methods. In the military context, however, this meant fighting against one occupying force together with the other. Still, the war conducted by the Forest Brothers was another war. In the 1950s the Estonian émigré community in the West adopted the term the Summer War to describe the armed resistance of 1941. Although it cannot be compared with the Finnish Winter War, which served as a model for the name and which has a slight flavour of national propaganda, the phrase Summer War is an appropriate description and can be used as a historical term.

1 *1940. aasta Eestis. Dokumente ja materjale.* Tallinn 1990; H. Mark, *Juulivalimised 1940 ja rahvusliku vastasrinna organiseerimine. Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* V. Stockholm 1957, pp. 188-198

2 E. Medijainen, *Saadiku saatus. Välisministeerium ja saatkonnad 1918–1940.* Tallinn 1997; A. Torma, *Protest Londonis. Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* III. Stockholm 1956, pp. 15-16; E. Ernits, *Eesti esindus Ühendriikides 1940/41. Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* V. Stockholm 1957, pp. 199-205

3 Branch of the Estonian State Archives (ERA, Party Archives). Fond (repository) 130, file 14503, vol. 4a, pp. 211-214

4 J. Ant, *Ühest vastupanugrupist kahes okupatsioonis. Tartu Ülikool läbi kolme okupatsiooni.* II, Tartu 1993, pp. 3-13

5 The Kaitseliit was the volunteer armed organisation in Estonia concerned with national defence between 1918 and 1940. It was based on the Home Guard (Omakaitse) set up in Tallinn in 1917 to protect citizens and property from revolutionary anarchy. The Defence League took part in the War of Independence in 1918–1920, both on the front line as well as in the rear. It guarded the borders, organised and trained reserves. After the war the Defence League was disbanded, and restored in 1925 as a reserve component of the armed forces in charge of military training and assisting the authorities in preserving law and order. In 1939 it had 42,600 members (100,000, including women's and youth organisations), all of whom were armed and kept their arms at home. Territorial units of the Defence League covered the whole country and its membership represented all levels of Estonian society proportionally

6 ERA, F. R-538, cat. 1, f. 30, pp. 50-51, 58-59

7 Ü. Jõgi, *"Erna" legendid ja tegelikkus.* Tallinn 1996

8 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 4, p. 29

9 I. Padar, *Metsavendlus Võrumaal 1941. aastal.* Tartu 1995. p. 10 (thesis for the history department at Tartu University)

10 Russian authorities had deported or forced some sections of the Estonian population to resettle, without any formal or legal arguments, during the Livonian War in the 16th century and the Nordic War in 1700–1710; by 1941, however, these actions had been forgotten.

11 *Punane terror.* Compiled by Mart Laar and Jaan Tross. Stockholm 1996

12 *Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* IV. Stockholm 1957, pp. 21-22; *Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* V. Stockholm 1957, pp. 173-175

13 ERA, F. R-1677, cat. 1, f. 10, p. 39

14 T. Noormets, *Eesti piirivalve okupatsioonist Suvesõjani 1940–1941.* Tallinn 1997 (manuscript in the possession of the Estonian Department of the Border Guard)

15 *Eestlased tööpataljonides 1941–1942. Mälestusi ja dokumente.* I. Tallinn 1993, pp. 5-6

16 ERA, F. 4416, c. 1, f. 408, p. 4

17 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 24, p. 136

18 *Eesti Sõna*. 30 December 1941

19 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 20, p. 2

20 H. Lindmäe, *1941. aasta sõjasuvi Tartumaal.* Tartu 1992, pp. 57-88

21 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 9, p. 61

22 ERA, F. R-358, c. 2, f. 2, p. 115

23 Ü. Jõgi, op cit, Tallinn 1996

24 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 33

25 ERA, F. 4416, c. 1, f. 468, pp. 1-8

26 ERA, F. R-358, c. 2, f. 2, p. 15

27 E. Leithammel, *1941. aasta suvel Mahtra rabas. Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* V. Stockholm 1957, pp. 42-48

28 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 24, pp. 71-78; f. 25, pp. 74-91

29 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 11, pp. 29-34

30 T. Nõmm, *Eesti üksustest Saksa sõjaväes. Formeerimine ja isikkoosseis. Akadeemia.* 1990, 1. pp. 113-135

31 In order to achieve the required concentration of forces to stop the spread of the guerrilla war all over Estonia similar to the confined regions in the northern and western Estonian islands, the Red Army would have had to keep almost half a million servicemen there (approximately the size of all the Red Army units in the three Baltic states before the war), which was impossible under the conditions of war

32 ERA, F. R-113, c. 1, f. 157, p. 18

33 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 3, pp. 12-14

34 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 26, p. 83

35 *Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* IV. Stockholm 1957, p. 26

36 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, ff. 3, 4, 8, 9, 12, 18, 24, 30; F. R-1677, c. 1, f. 10; *Järva Teataja*, 8 August 1942; *Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* IV. Stockholm 1957, p. 27

37 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, ff. 9, 11, 17; c. 2, f. 2; Ülo Jõgi, op cit, Tallinn 1996; *Eesti riik ja rahvas Teises maailmasõjas.* V. Stockholm 1957

38 ERA, F. R-358, c. 1, f. 32, p. 21

The Armed Resistance Movement in Estonia from 1944 to 1956

MART LAAR

A country which does not fight for its freedom will lose it. This situation applied to all countries sentenced by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact to Soviet domination. In 1940 the Baltic states were occupied by the Soviet Union. In all of them a strong armed resistance movement developed, which was eventually crushed at around the same time as the Hungarian uprising.

In Estonia people involved in the struggle against the Soviet occupation were called the Forest Brothers. In this article the Forest Brothers are defined as people who hid or lived illegally for any period of time and (or) participated in political or military action against the Soviet regime in Estonia. For some Forest Brothers hiding was all they did; others took part in specific actions against the authorities.

The Forest Brother movement in Estonia has always been a sort of myth or legend, but not up to now an object of study. Estonian children were familiar with stories about brave partisans, their songs were sung, but very few people knew what really happened. Information about the armed resistance movement reached Estonians in the West, but due to a lack of material only a few articles about it were published. The main information about the Forest Brothers came from a few freedom fighters who succeeded in getting it to the free press. Stories about one man, Erik Heine, gave the Estonian writer Arved Viirlaid the inspiration for his famous novel *Graves Without Crosses*, which has been translated into nearly 20 languages.

On the Soviet side, the armed resistance movement was passed over for a long time. In the late 1960s, many articles, books and even films were based on the fight against the "nationalists and bandits". Even though those studies used Soviet archives as a source, real events were disguised with lies and false information. The number of historians who obtained permission to use the Estonian Communist Party (ECP) or KGB archives was very limited.

The first chance to get a balanced picture of the armed resistance movement arrived with the changes in the Soviet Union with the start of *glasnost*. In 1988

the Estonian Heritage Society began a campaign to collect oral history records about the Soviet occupation, Soviet crimes and the resistance movement. Tens of thousands of pages of material were collected, including a significant amount of memoirs from freedom fighters. At the same time, step by step, historians were allowed to study documents in the archives of the ECP and even to use some documents from the KGB archives. Based mainly on oral records, but also using some documents from the archives, the first comprehensive study about the Forest Brothers was published in 1992 (Mart Laar. *Forest Brothers.* Tallinn 1992; in English, *War in the Woods.* Compass Press, 1992).

Unfortunately, this study has so far remained the only major work about the Forest Brothers. A few documents from the ECP archives and some articles have been published. The former Soviet archives have not been extensively used. Recent developments give some hope that interest in the resistance movement is growing again. The first memoirs have been published (Alfred Käärmann), a list of the Forest Brothers killed in action made, and studies based on both documents and oral records have been published. Hopefully, it will lead to new books and studies about the armed resistance movement.

The grounds for the armed resistance movement were created immediately after the occupation in 1940. Even though the voluntary military organisation the Kaitseliit (Defence League) was disarmed in 1940, its members continued to work together. Different resistance organisations were created, which after the start of the Soviet-German military conflict swung into action. Their goal was to restore the independence of Estonia. In the summer of 1941, an extensive partisan movement started. Most of southern Estonia was liberated by partisan units even before the German troops arrived. In the second largest city, Tartu, liberated by partisans, the surviving politicians rallied together, issuing a memorandum to Germany demanding the restoration of Estonia's independence. The memorandum was rejected by the Germans, and independence was not restored after the withdrawal of Soviet forces.

This made the resistance organisations against the Soviets go underground again, creating an anti-German resistance movement. An organisation based on several resistance groups, the National Committee of the Republic of Estonia (EVRK), was formed in March 1944. It succeeded in establishing a communications network with Estonian diplomats in Finland and Sweden, and through them with the rest of the West. In April 1944, the Germans arrested

the central figures in the committee, but by June the extent and influence of its activities had broadened even more. It worked closely with the former prime minister, Jüri Uluots, and his cabinet, who maintained the continuity of the Republic of Estonia. Intelligence groups (Haukka-Tümmler), ostensibly working for the Germans but in reality controlled by the EVRK, were created.

Using Haukka-Tümmler radio operators, the EVRK planned to bring a large number of groups into contact with each other. The new Soviet occupation was seen as a temporary phenomenon, during which it was essential to maintain communications with the West and prepare for the country's liberation. The orders of the EVRK, particularly Order No 2, included instructions to continue the resistance if Estonia were occupied again.

Unfortunately, preparations for the resistance were only in their early stages when, on 16 September 1944, Hitler's central command approved the Aster plan, according to which the German forces would withdraw from Estonia. Estonian units fighting on the front line were sacrificed in order to cover the retreat. In Tallinn, Uluots succeeded in re-establishing the government for three days, before the invading Red Army drowned all endeavours for freedom in blood. Before the onslaught, one of the Haukka-Tümmler commanders, Leo Tallgre, managed to transmit information to the West about the establishment of Uluots' government and the names of its members, thereby carrying out the final orders of the short-lived government. Very few of its members were fortunate enough to escape from the country before the Red Army swept in.

The first NKVD units reached Tallinn even before the city fell to the Red Army. As they took control of all the Abwehr offices, they received a pleasant surprise. Although the Germans had had sufficient time to evacuate their archives, they had neglected to remove one part of it, the part dealing with the resistance movement. German intelligence had not succeeded in eliminating Estonian nationalists; therefore it decided to let its Soviet counterparts finish the job, surrendering all the files it had gathered over the years, including the names and addresses of the resistance movement leaders, their friends and relatives. This was extremely valuable material which helped to make the elimination of the resistance organisations no more than a matter of time.

First of all, the authorities had to ensure that no more people could escape the NKVD. They placed the coastline under heavy guard, wrecking or confis-

cating the boats they found. Despite this, escapes continued. A number of daring men transported refugees waiting on the shore by speedboat to Sweden and Finland. A manhunt was launched for Estonian public figures. The first targets were members of the EVRK and of Otto Tief's government appointed by Jüri Uluots. One after another activists in the resistance movement during the German occupation were arrested.

The capture of the intelligence group led by Tallgre and Toomas Hellat proved to be a more formidable task, since it had managed to make some preparations for underground operations. However, the group lacked the necessary skills for a struggle against the experienced Soviet intelligence apparatus. The network of bunkers and storerooms that they had planned remained unbuilt, and the men sent to southern Estonia perished in battles. The group lacked documents and safe houses, and money was scarce. With the help of the files left by the Germans, the Soviet security apparatus identified a large number of apartments of the friends of activists. Moreover, the activists lacked a detailed plan for long-term operations. On the Soviet reoccupation, all remaining groups had to be united under a common leadership and their operations coordinated according to the guidelines set out by a national command centre to be set up in Sweden.

At a conference in October 1944, the group elaborated its plan of action, discussing the possibility of armed encounters and acts of sabotage. At that time, however, they felt such action to be impractical, considering it wiser to just get through the first months of the occupation. No one entertained any illusions about the future. Since the Soviet security apparatus was searching for the EVRK leadership, the activists decided to get the men targeted for capture out of the country, and to have another group take over operations, a second echelon which was yet unknown to the security apparatus. They planned to set up permanent communications between radio stations, to maintain communications with the West, and to get ready for active operations at the signal from the West. By doing so, they constructed an organisational framework on to which a larger resistance organisation could be built. Their greatest problem was the issue of acquiring speedboats to transport individuals through the ever-tightening net of Soviet border patrols.

By this time, the manhunt for the Haukka group had begun. The first men were captured as a result of routine checks. Despite its successes, the Soviet

security apparatus was dissatisfied. After all their efforts, they had not managed to capture the leaders, even though the ranks of the group were slowly being thinned out. In one instance, a Haukka-Tümmler member was shot while trying to escape from an apartment under surveillance by the NKVD. In two other incidents, both Tallgre and Hellat escaped capture thanks to a warning from a friend, the chess expert Paul Keres. Tallgre and Hellat continued to operate against all the odds. The data gathered mostly by Tallgre was usually transmitted to Sweden and Finland by the transmitter at the Technical University in Tallinn. Communication between Estonia and Sweden became quite regular.

In early December the resistance movement's leadership came within a hair's breadth of falling into the hands of the NKVD. The situation grew steadily more and more complicated. Although Finland received regular communications from them, it denied their request to send a speedboat to Estonia to rescue them. Finally, Sweden agreed to attempt a rescue. Tallgre and Hellat selected a spot for the landing and prepared to transport the most hunted of their men out of Estonia, leaving behind only those who were living as "legals" by this time. However, several days before the evacuation, the KGB arrested a Haukka member on the coast, and the carefully prepared plans collapsed.

On 10 December Hellat walked into a trap in a secret hideout. The KGB now used all the methods at its disposal to win him over. In a few days he was ready to cooperate. A wave of arrests followed. Nearly every apartment that his partner Tallgre might visit was placed under surveillance. On 24 December Tallgre was trapped in one of them. He resisted and shot one KGB officer, but was himself killed on the spot.

With this, the core of the resistance groups was destroyed. Most of the members of the EVRK were arrested. Many suffered the fate of being imprisoned for the same crime by two different occupying forces. Members of the Uluots government went on trial in Moscow. The minister for war, Jaan Maide, was sentenced to death, the rest to long terms in prison. They conducted themselves bravely during the trial, calling it an illegal settling of accounts with the government of an independent state, and accusing the Soviet Union of occupying Estonia.

It looked as if the KGB could claim a victory. The core of the activists who were left behind to organise the resistance movement had been destroyed, and

contact with the members of the committee who had fled to the West was cut off. However, while concentrating all their forces against the committee, the Soviet leaders gave time and room for a large spontaneous resistance movement to grow, which became for the KGB an even more serious problem than the EVRK resistance groups.

Men, women and children began hiding as early as the autumn of 1944. Everyone knew that the return of the Soviet occupation signified the return of terror and brutality. Everyone who could left the country, doing so in the resolute belief that they would soon come home again. Hardly anyone could conceive of the size of the injustice that would erase three independent states from the world map at the end of the war. In 1944, the Estonians were certain that the collapse of Germany would be followed by a conflict between the Western allies and Stalin, and that this conflict would restore freedom to the Baltic states and other nations. Until then, the people simply had to lie low and wait for the right moment to rise up for freedom.

The first to gather in the forests were those who had fought in the German army, and later in September 1944 under the flag of the Republic of Estonia. Most of them could have left the country along with the retreating German forces but a majority preferred to continue the fight in Estonia. The ranks of the Forest Brothers swelled with the beginning of the Red Army's conscription drive, which began in southern Estonia in August and September 1944, arriving in northern Estonia some time later.

In the first period of resistance the Forest Brothers mostly hid and showed no signs of activity. Estonians hoped that with the end of the war in Europe, a new world war would start, which would bring liberty to Estonia. The end of the war made it clear to every Forest Brother that the occupation would continue for some time. Passive resistance was no longer adequate if they wanted to stay alive. They had to coordinate their plans more tightly and engage in more effective actions if they were to preserve the hope of the restoration of independence.

So at the start of the summer the Forest Brothers went into action and fought openly against the Soviets. The first strikes were made against local representatives of the Soviet authorities. They targeted Soviet security personnel, reprisal squads made up of collaborators, and small military units, focusing on senior officers. On 14 July 1945, four Red Army soldiers were killed in

an attack on a unit in Virumaa district in the parish of Roela near the village of Kulina. On July 24, a military vehicle carrying three navy officers was attacked at Valgejõe in Harjumaa district. All three were killed. An army vehicle was ambushed near Väike-Maarja in Virumaa; a Colonel Popov and a Lieutenant Colonel Udayev were seriously wounded. In the summer of 1945, Kaagjärve Forest Brother Otto Lill shot a Red Army counterintelligence officer called Abahimov. These are only a few of the attacks carried out in the summer of 1945; similar operations were conducted throughout the entire country. The Forest Brothers took the dead officers' and soldiers' weapons and uniforms, which they used themselves. They avoided attacking large military units. Their strategy was to operate in small groups, to strike, and vanish.

A favourite tactic was to ambush most bitter enemies – high-ranking officers of the NKVD. On 26 July 1945, in Tartumaa district in the parish of Lohusuu on the Narva-Tartu road, two supervisors of the Leningrad NKVD Road Construction Administration were shot dead; their driver escaped. On 16 August 1949, the Järvamaa district security chief, Colonel Paul, fell victim to an ambush on the Tallinn-Paide road. A tree on the road blocked his way. He was taken into a nearby thicket, told of his sentence and summarily shot.

In addition to attacks on military personnel, the Forest Brothers also engaged in subversive activities and acts of sabotage. The ECP Central Committee archives contain reports of a train crammed with Soviet military personnel that was targeted by explosives on the Pärnu-Tallinn line near the town of Paikuse on 20 June 1948. Explosions occurred on other railway lines as well. Security reports list 18 subversive operations that were carried out in Estonia by partisans between 1944 and 1953.

High on the Forest Brothers' agenda were attacks on places of detention to free imprisoned comrades. Memoirs record an attempt to attack the Tartu City Prison. Accounts by German prisoners of war tell of an unsuccessful operation by the Forest Brothers to free German prisoners of war from a prison camp in the Virumaa district. An attempt by Forest Brothers to free the prisoners in Pärnu prison has been described in detail in CPE archives and several memoirs. Although the Forest Brothers met with little success in their attacks on major detention centres, they ran effective assaults against small country prisons and frequently ambushed prisoner convoys.

Sometimes the Forest Brothers temporarily seized power from the Execu-

tive Committee over an entire settlement. For instance, the Hargla Forest Brothers invaded and took over Hargla in 1945 in retaliation for the activities of NKVD battalions. Two members of reprisal squads fell in the battle; the others fled. The largest area ever taken over by the Forest Brothers was the town of Kilingi-Nõmme in southern Estonia.

The Forest Brothers considered it their duty to uphold the nation's spirit of resistance while demoralising and intimidating the Soviet authorities. In retaliation for the destruction of monuments to the Estonian War of Independence, they blew up monuments to the Red Army. On holidays dear to the Estonian people (Independence Day on 24 February, Victory Day on 22 June), the outlawed blue, black and white national flags were hoisted on tall trees or buildings.

The Forest Brothers demonstrated their strength by disrupting a number of Soviet projects and state holidays. It is hardly surprising that many of their major operations were launched on the anniversary of the "Great October Revolution", the widely celebrated Stalin's "Constitution Day", and other holidays. In some areas, partisan-produced leaflets urged the people not to participate in these celebrations.

Naturally, both sides focused special attention on elections, which the Soviet authorities hoped would legalise their conquest of the country. The Forest Brothers did their best to thwart the elections. In one instance, they broke up a notice-board holding election literature near the Keeni machinery and tractor station, replacing it with a poster calling on the population to disrupt the elections by casting either blank ballot papers or ones with the names of anti-Bolshevik individuals. They claimed that the Bolsheviks were trying to mislead the world with their false elections. The poster was signed "the Forest Brothers". Similar posters were put up in other parts of Estonia. In some districts, partisans undertook more serious operations, such as stealing voter registers. They also assaulted Soviet candidates. In 1946 the Forest Brothers, under the leadership of Johannes Heeska, attacked a polling station in Võrumaa district's Urvaste parish, killing Soviet security guards in the station and some hated local Soviet activists.

Many Forest Brother units deliberately inflicted damage on the authorities by attacking transport and shipments of money and goods. First of all, the partisans needed these to replenish their own supplies. Secondly, the opera-

tions served to reaffirm their authority among the population. On 1 December 1948, the most sensational train robbery of the post-war period took place between Sõmerpalu and Kurenurme in Võrumaa district, its echoes reaching Moscow.

The Forest Brothers directed their activities against local representatives of the Soviet system. Active collaborators were first warned, but if they continued cooperation with the KGB or with other Soviet institutions and harmed local people, they were often killed. How many victims did the Forest Brothers claim? The exact numbers are hard to determine, but the official Soviet tally places the count at 891. Most of the victims were members of the People's Defence units (better known as reprisal squads), local party secretaries, local Komsomol leaders, Soviet security personnel or collaborators.

The total number of the Forest Brothers is still hard to estimate. Lots of people moved from an illegal status to legal, and vice versa. This kind of mobility makes the determination of their numbers extremely difficult. According to figures in Soviet archives, roughly 15,000 Forest Brothers had been either neutralised or lured out of the forests by 1947. According to the Soviet authorities, 414 armed partisan units, comprising 2,386 members, along with 2,833 armed isolated Forest Brothers, were eliminated between the end of 1944 and 1 January 1947. In addition, 5,868 former Forest Brothers had been legalised (i.e. had left the forests and resumed normal life and work). By November 1947, 8,468 Forest Brothers had been neutralised (i.e. killed or imprisoned) and 6,600 had been legalised. At that time, there were at least as many still in the forests, that is from 10,000 to 15,000 people. If we add those who took to the forests later, specially after the deportations of 1949, the total number of the Estonian Forest Brothers approaches between 30,000 and 40,000. The majority only tried to hide, sometimes moving back to normal life and then going underground again. Even if these people were armed, they did not participate in any action against the Soviets. Nearly half of them belonged to organised units, mostly from three to 20 people.

Inevitably, partisan activity was weaker in the larger towns and densely populated districts, but strong in densely forested country areas. The Forest Brothers' operations in Võrumaa and Virumaa were the most significant in all Estonia. The feats of the Pärnumaa and Läänemaa district partisans were not far behind. A number of large forests and swamps lie between those two dis-

tricts. Despite its sparse forests and the high concentration of Soviet troops, Saaremaa Island was another site of extensive Forest Brother activities. In these areas some famous resistance movement leaders were raised. Among them were Ants Kaljurand from Pärnumaa, Heino Lipp from Virumaa and Haljand Koovik from Võrumaa.

The fugitives were not always men, but sometimes entire families that were forced to go into hiding. Some took their farm animals with them. Several erected houses and barns, usually underground and camouflaged. Some forest clearings held fields for growing crops. Forest Brother groups included a significant number of women and sometimes children.

Although most of the partisans were Estonians, there were other nationalities as well, and not only citizens of the Republic of Estonia, but Russians and Germans who happened to be in Estonia because of the war. The ranks of the Forest Brothers were swelled by German prisoners of war who had escaped from prison camps. The Estonian and Latvian partisans worked in close cooperation, exchanging information and providing mutual assistance with arms and supplies.

The Forest Brothers often hid in houses or on farms. There they had no worries about food, shelter or boredom. They could keep a watch on everything that went on in the village. Almost all of them lived this way for the duration of the war, while the NKVD apparatus was still incomplete and its files undeveloped. However, once the NKVD was armed with information from the files, it started searching houses and farms, and the results were devastating. The occupants of any house sheltering a Forest Brother were all sent to Siberia. That was one reason why the fugitives began to look to the forests for cover.

Some houses offered shelter in carefully camouflaged hideouts. However, most partisans found refuge in the forests, in dense thickets, swamps and bogs. In the summer they slept rough, in tents, or in hay or peat sheds. The arrival of autumn made life extremely uncomfortable in those places.

For this reason, the Forest Brothers had to think about building bunkers. Frequently, the bunkers were located in hillocks or on hummocks within marshes. They were carefully camouflaged and often equipped with an emergency escape route disguised with special care. Quite often, the bunker trapdoor was covered by a tree stump or a young fir tree. Many were well defended and equipped with well-constructed loopholes and trenches.

Proper care of the bunker and the arms was vitally important. The varied nature of the Forest Brothers' armaments made this quite difficult. They had plenty of weapons, since the Germans had left behind entire arsenals as they withdrew in 1944.

The ECP Historical Archives contain reports of cannons carefully dismantled and hidden by the Forest Brothers. Most groups lacked heavy artillery. Eerik Heine writes of mine throwers and other weapons, but there is little hard evidence of these. People recall that some groups did have mine throwers hidden away just in case they were needed for a major battle. The heaviest artillery used by the Forest Brothers was reportedly an anti-aircraft gun, with which the partisans fired on Red Army transport planes in Pärnumaa district.

On the other hand, they boasted an extensive arsenal of lighter weapons. Of course, German weapons predominated at first, but between 1946 and 1947 it became necessary to exchange them for Russian weapons, the primary reason being problems with ammunition. German cartridges tended to rust, and new ones were nowhere to be found. By the time their movement waned, most Forest Brothers had Russian weapons, which were captured in raids on town halls, People's Defence units and Red Army units. Pistols, however, were predominantly of German or Belgian makes. The 7.65mm calibre Walther PP was especially popular. Russian TT-30s (better known as "five-pointed stars") and Nagant revolvers were also in use.

Although Russian rifles and German carbines were widely used, automatic weapons were naturally the weapons of choice. Submachine guns included the German MP 38-40 as well as a few Sturmgewehr MP-44s. An impressive weapon was the Russian submachine gun or Pepeshka. From the start, Russian models predominated among machine guns, some of which (such as the Maxim) had been used in the former Republic of Estonia. The powerful German MG-42, on the other hand, demanded extensive care and used up cartridges far too rapidly. The Russian light machine gun Degtyaryov was widely used alongside heavy machine guns.

The Forest Brothers also possessed hand grenades and rifle grenades. Larger groups had German bazookas, and the effective "stovepipe", officially named Grenade Launcher No 54. This 88mm weapon had an electric trigger and a maximum range of 130 metres.

There were few problems with other equipment. The Forest Brothers had

no common uniform or kit. They usually moved about in peasant clothes or in the old Estonian uniform; for operations they sometimes wore Soviet army or security forces uniforms. Elements of the German army uniform and the Estonian Defence League uniform were also used. It depended on whether they were interested in making their identity known or not.

They never succeeded in continuing the resistance long without the support of the local population. The support and sympathy of the local people were of the utmost importance to them. Partisan war specialist V. Redelis once remarked that a successful partisan war requires leaders who, first of all, have a strong will, and second, are able to win popular support. "In other words, teamwork between the partisan leaders and the population is a fundamental requirement of any partisan movement." Only movements receiving substantial assistance from outside sources can afford to ignore to some extent popular opinion, but even then their operations run into trouble. It would not be unreasonable to claim that popular support was the key to the Estonian Forest Brothers' long struggle.

Naturally, food supplies were of primary importance. The partisans' food was either delivered to pre-arranged spots in the forest or fetched by the men themselves. Procuring food for the winter was critical. The Forest Brothers got all their supplies, including clothes, tools and everyday necessities, from farms. They also relied heavily on the information they got from local people. They were well informed of the movements of the reprisal squads and even the NKVD units. Information on Soviet transport columns and shipments of money was passed on to them. They had friends in high places, all the way up through the KGB headquarters in Tallinn.

A review of the resistance movement in Estonia would not be complete if we did not look at the civilian sector that operated primarily in the cities, those whom the Estonians called the City Brothers. The City Brothers, an influential component of the resistance movement in postwar Estonia, have been largely neglected in writings about the partisans. The civilian resistance movement was overshadowed by the armed struggle in the forests and was gradually forgotten. And yet it constituted an essential part of the resistance movement by being a transitional force to the next part. Without this wing, the ten years of resistance in the forests would not have been possible. The Forest Brothers frequently needed a temporary place to hide when danger

threatened; they needed medical supplies and, most important of all, information. The City Brothers were very helpful in obtaining forged documents. It was also easier to sell stolen goods in the cities. The leaflets and proclamations distributed by the City Brothers represented a valuable contribution to the resistance.

The more impressive actions carried out by the City Brothers included the hoisting of the blue, black and white flag in public places on national holidays. Nothing succeeded in annoying the new authorities more than the Estonian flag. It became a symbol of the continuing resistance, similar to the letter "V" scratched on walls in France during the Nazi occupation. The discovery of the flag in a person's home was sufficient grounds for deportation to a Siberian labour camp, so, naturally, hoisting it was an even greater crime. Still, it was hoisted again and again in public places throughout the entire period of the occupation, even after the end of the Forest Brother movement, with dogged persistence. Victory Day (22 June) was one of the most popular holidays, second only to the anniversary of Estonian independence (24 February). Student organisations tried to protect monuments commemorating the War of Independence from Soviet demolition squads, and destroyed Soviet monuments. When the so-called Liberators' Monument to the Soviet regime in Tallinn was blown up in 1945, the action sent shock waves far and wide. It was carried out by a small group of female students in response to the second removal of a monument to teachers and students who had fallen in the War of Independence. The exact number of student organisations in postwar Estonia is not known, but current information suggests that there were nearly 30.

As the armed resistance movement started without central command or control, most of the Forest Brother units acted separately. It is clear that a nationwide central command structure is crucial for the success of any resistance movement. The establishment of such an organisation is a formidable task. A command centre never formed in many countries engaged in active resistance against invaders during the Second World War. On one hand, a central organisation that directs all members and all activities makes a resistance movement significantly more efficient. On the other hand, it increases the chances of detection. However, participation in a resistance movement is a personal decision, demanding a higher-than-average degree of initiative and

resourcefulness, and people of this character do not submit easily to the orders and directives that are inevitable in the operation of a centralised organisation. And yet, some kind of central command is essential for a resistance movement, if only to maintain communications with the outside world. This realisation had led to the formation of the Haukka-Tümmler group which was crushed by the NKVD in late 1944. Major L.Henriksoo had also attempted to create a coordinated resistance organisation in 1945 – the Eesti Päästekomitee (EP, Committee for Saving Estonia) – but by the end of the year, the Soviet security apparatus had destroyed this movement as well.

A comprehensive Forest Brother organisation was formed in spite of these early setbacks. In 1945 and 1946 Endel Redlich of the Läänemaa district set up an alliance of groups in Läänemaa and Harjumaa. One of the goals of this organisation was to restore contacts with the Estonian government in exile.

Since 1945 the EVRK in Sweden had been trying to contact the men who had participated in the resistance against the Germans and were still in Estonia. A speedboat continued to shuttle between Sweden and Saaremaa Island. Radio communications were not completely broken off, although the existence of a radio link was officially denied. Of the Estonian diplomats, the ambassador to London, August Torma, was directly connected to the resistance movement. In the messages that were intercepted by the Soviet security forces he urges the Forest Brothers to continue the resistance while avoiding major operations, deeming it wiser to wait for the right moment.

The first failures and the break-off of communications did not discourage the "centre" in Sweden. In November 1946, Richard Saago and Arseeni Sagur landed on Saaremaa Island. Saago carried a radio transmitter which was to remain in Estonia. He succeeded in getting to Tartu and Tallinn, seeking out old acquaintances and recruiting the best people for intelligence work. He gave the local agent an American-made portable radio transmitter, money, two pistols, a camera and other equipment. They agreed on transmission schedules and passwords.

After carrying out his assignment, Saago returned to Saaremaa where a motorboat was to take him back to Sweden. On 20 December 1946 the border patrol arrested both Saago and Sagur. They seized a great deal of material evidence, including a letter from Saago to his companions who remained behind. Armed with this information, the security apparatus infiltrated one of

its own men into Saago's network. The agent found out the addresses of members of the group and had them all arrested, but did not succeed in setting up a counterintelligence operation with this group.

Regular communications were finally established between Estonia and Sweden thanks to a man named Richard Saaliste. Saaliste fought against the Red Army in 1941, afterwards against the Germans. He joined the Estonian troops again in 1944, was wounded and evacuated to Sweden. In October 1946, along with three companions, weapons and a radio transmitter, he set out for his homeland. He succeeded in finding his brother Artur in the forest, and worked to establish broader contacts.

Saaliste proved to be a capable organiser. He quickly succeeded in combining several partisan groups into one smoothly operating unit. These men were not simple Forest Brothers, but well-organised troops. He also sought to establish ties with Redlich's organisation, called the Relvastatud Võitluse Liit (RVL, Armed Resistance League), and thus managed to increase the work of the movement significantly.

Saaliste's first task was to re-establish communciations with Sweden. To replace the radio transmitter lost at their landing, he quickly managed to find one of the Haukka group's radio operators still undiscovered by the NKVD. Vambola Orav had managed to keep his identity secret and to blend into Soviet society. The first transmission to Sweden was made in June 1947 from the Lelle region in the Pärnumaa district. After that, transmissions increased, which was a concern to the Soviet security apparatus. Massive raids were carried out in the forests of Lelle and Järva. Buses equipped with radar equipment cruised the roads, but Saaliste always managed to escape the sieges.

By this time, the RVL had expanded far outside its original home in Läänemaa. The goal of the organisation was the restoration of Estonia's independence. Its programme of action states: "The organisation is preparing an armed uprising against the Soviet regime at such a time when England and the United States go to war against the Soviet Union or when a political coup occurs in the Soviet Union itself."

Above all, in order to achieve its goals, the men had to remain hidden, and to preserve as many organised and armed combatants as possible for battles in the future. Generally, engaging in armed combat was not the RVL's main purpose. Its primary goal was the establishment of structures necessary for an

eventual uprising, stockpiling weapons and ammunition, and the preservation of the population's desire and ability to resist. For this reason, the RVL put a big effort into political education. Leaflets distributed through its central command and local organisations called on the people to continue the resistance and instructed them in methods of passive resistance.

The structure of the RVL was simple. It was led by a commander who answered only to the legal government of the Republic of Estonia. The central commander appointed the commanders of municipal organisations (or districts made up of several towns). The RVL did not seek a large membership. Rather, it emphasised getting agents into each region and each parish to maintain contact with the local Forest Brothers as well as the political resistance. It sent its men to work in Soviet institutions, even in the security apparatus.

Each parish had one RVL agent, whose subordinates were known only to him. The parish agents were in contact with the league's district commanders, who in turn reported to central headquarters. The organisation exercised strict discipline, with violators subject to the death penalty. Harassing or disturbing the local population, even to obtain food, was strictly prohibited. Redlich asserted that the property of the Estonian people was sacred. Forest Brothers who violated discipline and harassed members of the local population were tried and executed.

The organisation ran a printing press which published leaflets and proclamations. Their leaflets proved remarkably effective. For the first time the Forest Brothers scattered throughout the country learned of a command structure which was genuinely devoted to liberating the country. The leaflets assured them that the Western states would not abandon Estonia. The partisans were to continue to resist and preserve their strength for a decisive strike at the appropriate time. The Forest Brothers were told to refrain from harassing the authorities with isolated minor operations, since these served only to incur needless losses. The league's leaflets, urging the population to continue its passive resistance to the Soviet regime, were also distributed in cities. The RVL planned training opportunities for the leaders of Forest Brother groups, but succeeded in putting together only one training session, where Redlich taught several dozen men how to use a radio transmitter and some principles of counterintelligence.

There are no exact accounts of the size of the league. The major centres of the organisation were located in Läänemaa, Harjumaa, Tartumaa, Pärnumaa

and Virumaa; a total of 38 parishes were under its influence. Its network included Võrumaa and Viljandimaa districts as well. Information on the numbers of league members is conflicting; most estimates range between 2,000 and 5,000 men. The league also brought together student resistance groups and underground organisations in the cities, being especially influential in Tallinn.

The work of the RVL was facilitated by the fact that the resistance movement in Estonia peaked between 1945 and 1947. In those days, actual power in the countryside belonged to the Forest Brothers. The Soviets held power in most villages and towns, but the Forest Brothers ruled at night. The authorities lived in a state of perpetual fear. Soviet control failed to reach some of the more remote forest villages until the after the mass deportations of 1949. In several districts transport columns would move only when accompanied by armed escorts. Executive Committee buildings resembled fortresses with armed guards and even trenches. Large numbers of military units were stationed in Estonia to ensure security for the local Soviet-run administration.

The rise of the resistance movement in Estonia was a bad surprise for the authorities. The suppression of the movement on the conquered territory quickly became a crucial issue for them. In 1944 and 1945 the Soviets tried to fight the spontaneous growth of the resistance movement with the help of defence groups made up of local communists. But the battalions, given the official name Rahvakaitse (People's Defence), created in 1944 to fight the Forest Brothers, never lived up to expectations. This situation upset Moscow considerably, and the authorities demanded that the ECP take decisive steps to end the resistance once and for all.

On 7 August 1945, the CEP Central Committee held a meeting to discuss tactics against the "bandits". The Moscow representative in the CEP, Sergei Sazonov, demanded action against the resistance movement and its supporters. He pointed out that a strong hand is loved by the people and feared by its enemies. The KGB had to target the core of the resistance movement in order to eliminate it. It was reported that the resettlement of all the families of the Forest Brothers and their collaborators in several towns had seriously damaged it. The outcome of the meeting was summarised by Comrade Perov, who insisted on the need for strengthening the reprisal squads with increases in salaries and benefits, recruiting a band of informants either by enticement

or intimidation, and dealing a blow to the families and supporters of the Forest Brothers. He said that they should either be arrested or placed in some kind of economic trap. The actions had to be well publicised, and an example made of two or three families from each parish. Soon after the meeting, a directive was issued ordering the strengthening of the reprisal squads and the expropriation of land and property from the supporters and families of the Forest Brothers. To fight the resistance movement, the Soviets cleverly decided to destroy their base among the civilian population.

Even so, most of the responsibility in the battle against the Forest Brothers lay not with the reprisal squads but with the security forces, which operated under several different names in the postwar years, the NKVD – Narodnyi Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs), then the KGB – Komitet Gossudarstvennoi Bezopastnosti (the Committee for State Security), but whose purpose remained the same. The creation of a Ministry for State Security in the government of the Estonian SSR affirms the special significance of the security apparatus in postwar Estonia. Until 1950 this ministry was headed by the infamous Boris Kumm, who had been at the forefront of the Red terror in Estonia in 1940 and 1941, playing a leading role in the deportations of 14 June 1941. But often police and security resources proved insufficient for major operations against the resistance. In these cases border guards, the regular army or Interior Ministry forces (reporting to the NKVD) were brought in. The use of the air force also proved disappointing. Air surveillance occasionally succeeded in discovering groups of Forest Brothers, but blanket fire proved to be effective against the low-flying light Russian planes. The authorities were forced to find other ways to suppress the resistance.

In 1944, and even more so in 1945, the Soviet authorities placed great hopes on the hit squads sent into rural areas. They were to find the Forest Brothers' hiding places and destroy the men and their bunkers. However, local residents refused to help these troops, even when they were arrested and tortured. For this reason, the operations of the hit squads remained generally ineffective. They did manage to deal the Forest Brothers severe blows in some instances, but a clear success remained evasive. The functions of the hit squads were transferred to the reprisal squads who organised constant surveillance of the Forest Brothers and their supporters.

The most trustworthy party members were sent to work for the security apparatus; in essence, the district party committees became branches of the Committee for State Security. Every report sent to the party committees about an individual's anti-Soviet activities or attitude was immediately forwarded to the security forces. Party workers were also made to help the security apparatus in recruiting local agents.

Gradually, the significance of the security apparatus in the struggle against the Forest Brothers became pivotal. It used its agents to discover the individuals helping them, subsequently arresting them and forcing them under torture to collaborate. The arrest of a person's family became a powerful method of coercion. By essentially taking the family hostage, the security apparatus hoped to gain information on the Forest Brothers' movements and the location of their bunkers, so that ambushes could be organised to capture them. According to records in the CPE archives, female agents were widely used to entrap Forest Brothers. The results of these operations were all too often ruinous for the partisans.

One of the most successful methods of the security apparatus was the creation of false Forest Brothers. Professional security agents and their families were sent to live in areas known to be teeming with partisan activity, and these agents soon began "helping" them. An even more frequent tactic was the infiltration of security agents into units. These men were true professionals and it was nearly impossible to distinguish them from real Forest Brothers. These false partisans lived peacefully for some time within the units, taking part in operations and all aspects of partisan life, all the while finding out who were the supporters, their ties with other groups, the locations of their storehouses and bunkers. When the reconnaissance work was done, a false Forest Brother would lure his companions into a trap.

Soon enough, the security apparatus acquired experience in dealing with the Forest Brothers, and their failures became fewer. They succeeded in pinpointing the location of many bunkers, whereupon they surrounded the entire area with Interior Ministry forces and raided the bunkers with specially trained assault platoons. The platoon was instructed to scatter the partisans and force them to flee. As the Forest Brothers withdrew, they were met by an ambush that cut them down with heavy crossfire.

The security forces did not always succeed in surprising the Forest Broth-

ers. Most units had a round-the-clock guard who could warn of the arrival of danger. Many battles that ensued raged for hours as the Forest Brothers tried to break out of the siege. If an escape appeared to be impossible the partisans made sure that their lives were paid for dearly by the attackers.

Frequently, the invading forces suffered heavy casualties under partisan fire. In 1946 an army battalion attacked a small Forest Brother unit in the Viru-Kudina district of Virumaa. The Forest Brothers, being familiar with the local terrain, found cover and prepared for a battle. The first line of attackers was mown down across a field. This created confusion in the ranks of the raiders, at which point the Forest Brothers changed positions to prepare for the next assault. When the partisans ran out of ammunition, they took it from fallen enemies. The security forces lost more than 50 men. The battle ended at nightfall with the Forest Brothers breaking out of the encirclement.

The fiercest battles raged where the Forest Brothers realised from the start that they had no hope of escape. On 1 April 1946, the security apparatus received reports that "bandits" had been sighted near Määritsa farm in the parish of Sõmerpalu in Võrumaa. Army and security detachments assembled quickly, and surrounded the farm with about ten men. Reinforcements soon arrived. By the end of the operation there were a couple of hundred men with anti-tank guns, heavy machine guns and even a couple of cannons outside the farm. The partisans trapped in the farmhouse responded to demands for surrender with gunfire when they realised that escape was impossible. They hung a blue, black and white flag from the window and kept firing.

To win the siege, the attackers had no choice but to set the farmhouse on fire. In its charred remains they found the bodies of about ten people, including the owners of the farm. In the farmhouse stove, they found a flowerpot with a bottle containing a letter calling on the Estonian people to continue their struggle against the occupiers. The Estonian Forest Brothers knew how to fight and knew how to die. However, the forces were unevenly matched. Every fallen KGB soldier was replaced by another, whereas the Forest Brothers had no resources to replenish their ranks. By November 1947, 8,468 Forest Brothers had been killed or imprisoned and 6,600 had been "legalised". Presumably, this same rate – about 3,000 taken out of commission every year – continued until the end of the decade. These were serious losses. In 1947 and 1948 partisan activity subsided. The movement began to die out.

At the end of 1947 some members of the central command of the RVL walked into a KGB trap and one of them was taken alive. Widespread arrests and attacks on the headquarters of the central command followed. Even though most members of the central command broke out from the siege, losses were high. The security forces launched a large-scale operation against the camps of the RVL sub-units. Fierce battles broke out in the forests. Despite the fact that they had the advantage of surprise and much greater numbers on their side, the security forces lost in several areas.

Usually, however, the Forest Brothers did not fare so well. Taken by surprise, many were unable to resist and fell without firing a single shot. Many were captured, particularly in Läänemaa and Harjumaa. Reports indicate that the Soviet security apparatus seized about 500 Forest Brothers. These represented the most active segment of the RVL movement. Although the central command remained untouched, it lost most of its contacts. A wave of mutual distrust spread through Forest Brother units. Nevertheless, it took the KGB one and a half more years to capture the central command of the RVL. On 27 February 1949, KGB special units attacked an RVL central command bunker in a swamp in the Halinga parish of the Pärnumaa district three kilometres from the town of Pärnu-Jaagupi. In the exchange of gunfire, nine RVL command members and many Soviet soldiers were killed.

Despite the security apparatus' efforts, some RVL members were still free. When Vambola Orav, the radio operator for Saaliste's unit, was arrested in 1950, the last communications with Sweden were broken off. Of all the groups most actively connected to Saaliste, only Eerich Järlet's unit continued to operate. On 5 September 1951, Järlet's unit stole a consignment of money on the Tallinn-Pärnu narrow-gauge railway. The Forest Brothers made off with 200,000 rubles. The security forces succeeded in capturing the unit only after they had sent a false Forest Brother group into the woods, who seized Järlet with the help of poisoned vodka.

The weakening of the Forest Brother movement provided ample opportunity for the authorities to take decisive steps towards sovietising Estonia once and for all. The Soviets had planned to destroy private farmers in Estonia by force, launching massive new deportations of Estonians to Siberia and collectivising Estonian agriculture. On 25 and 26 March 1949 the Soviets deported more than 20,000 people to Siberia. According to official reports, 7,785 fami-

lies were forcibly relocated, including 4,507 men (most of them elderly), 10,274 women and 5,717 children. It is obvious that the quota was reached mostly at the expense of women and children. The proportion of women, children and the elderly among the deportees exceeded 90 per cent.

The Forest Brothers were powerless to prevent these large-scale deportations. The situation was similar in Latvia and Lithuania. Attacks on deportation vehicles could easily harm the deportees, and the Forest Brothers were no match for the well-armed squads that accompanied them. And yet, the Forest Brothers took on deportation squads in many areas. For instance, in the town of Iisaku in Virumaa, a group of security operatives went to seize the Forest Brother leader Rabin, who opened fire on the squad and was shot dead in the ensuing battle. On 25 March 1949, one Forest Brother unit fired on an Interior Ministry patrol on its way to deport local families and destroyed railway signals near Kadrina in Virumaa.

Not all people on KGB lists were found. Some were warned by Forest Brothers, some by relatives in local Soviet institutions. The forests filled with people who no longer had anything to lose. Their homes had been looted, their families murdered or sent to Siberia. The only thing that kept many of them going was the desire for revenge. "Better to die here than in Siberia!" the slogan was.

A wave of brutality swept across Estonia. Many collaborators actively assisting in the deportations were locked in their homes by the partisans, the houses doused with petrol and set on fire. The Forest Brothers stalked and murdered them. Up to then, the partisans had rarely killed the families of their political opponents, but now in desperation, they frequently failed to differentiate between man, woman or child. The nation's pain was at its peak; its anguish had reached its limits.

The Forest Brother movement became more bitter. New, more skilful and professional units formed, and planned their actions more carefully. In the autumn of 1949 they robbed banks and money shipments in many parts of Estonia, and raided cooperative stores and dairies. They were particularly eager to track down the security workers and Soviet activists who had played an active part in the deportations. The people knew all too well who they were. Documents found in KGB archives contain repeated expressions of regret about the untimely demise of comrades who had been most active in "eliminating the *kulak* class" in Estonia. The Forest Brothers apprehended some

higher security officials as well; for instance, the security chief of Järvamaa district, who was sentenced and executed in the forest after a trial. The sudden surge of activity caused deep concern among the authorities. The CEP Central Committee issued a directive ordering the rapid elimination of the movement. For a while, the directive was to remain no more than a piece of paper.

In reality, the peak of the movement had already subsided by this time. Anger and desperation rarely lead to victory in battle. Furthermore, the indifference shown by the West towards the deportations made the Forest Brothers realise that they could hope for little help from that part of the world.

Why, then, did the battles and the resistance continue? Perhaps Alfred Käärmann answers the question most clearly: "And what was this drive that forced us, the last Forest Brothers, to stay in hiding? I'll tell you. We knew that as long as we were still breathing, holding a gun and feeling Estonia's soil beneath our feet, everything was all right. We knew that it was much worse for our captured comrades. We knew that there was a one-way ticket to Siberia booked for us. We knew that a bullet from our own gun would save us from enemy torture." In 1949 the security forces succeeded in apprehending the well-known partisan Ants the Terrible in Pärnumaa. A tribunal sentenced him to death by firing squad along with three of his companions in 1951.

Battles raged throughout Estonia. Although raiding parties suffered serious losses, they achieved their goal of destroying the bunkers. The security apparatus was able to subvert the dominant groups more easily once they had succeeded in infiltrating one of their agents into them. Voldemar Piho's partisan unit was wiped out this way. By this time, the security apparatus had added new tactics to its repertoire. These have been attributed to Colonel Moskaleno, who replaced Boris Kumm as the ESSR minister for security in 1950. More and more Forest Brothers were caught by the security forces in the early 1950s through poisoning. Now there remained only three or four-member units without a permanent base. According to KGB files, the last battles with the Forest Brothers were fought in 1955 and 1956.

These years can be considered the final moments of the widespread armed resistance. The Soviet Union's suppression of the Hungarian uprising and the total inactivity of the West brought an end to all hopes of any real Western assistance for the captive nations. Resistance had become meaningless. When the Soviet regime declared an amnesty once more in 1956 and 1957, masses

of men and women emerged from the forests. In 1956, Soviet tanks crushed Hungary's quest for freedom. The world reacted to the tragedy with indifference, offering no more than feeble protests in response. Watching the events in Hungary, the captive nations finally realised that they could expect no concrete assistance from the "free world". However, the nascent political thaw in the Soviet Union allowed the Estonians to begin to influence political trends in their country by gaining positions in the Soviet government. The thaw also opened the way for political resistance. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, secret student organisations were the vanguards of this new trend in Estonia. From the late 1960s onwards, political dissidents led the movement.

At the time of the destruction of the resistance movement Western intelligence became interested in developments in the Baltic. The prelude to the involvement in the Baltic states of several intelligence services dates back to the mid-1940s, when the British intelligence service, the SIS, established contacts with the Baltic resistance movements while the Baltic states were still under German occupation. The liaison officer between the Baltic independence movements and British intelligence in Stockholm was Alexander "Sandy" McKibbin, who had been an SIS representative in Estonia until 1939. Agents equipped with radio transmitters were sent to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to establish communications. Some were apprehended by the Germans, and the others suspended their operations in 1944 and 1945 and left the area when the Red Army forced its way in.

By the early 1950s, Western policy toward the Baltic states had shaken off its lethargy. The escalation of the Cold War stimulated the intensification of Baltic operations by the American and British intelligence services. With the outbreak of the Korean War, Western governments needed information on possible mobilisation being carried out in the Soviet Union's westernmost regions. By the end of the 1940s contacts between the CIA and the SIS, which up to then had almost singlehandedly controlled Baltic operations, intensified. The SIS was convinced of its agents' loyalty and the Americans believed them. In reality, the KGB controlled not only the SIS agents in the Baltics, but, through Kim Philby, also the training of SIS agents in London and Germany.

In the late 1940s, the SIS had established a special centre in London for the training of agents to be sent to the Baltic. The centre operated in cooperation with the Baltic states' embassies in London. Its leaders included Colonel Alfons

Rebane, Stasys Žymantas and Rudolph Silaraijs as the Estonian, Lithuanian and Latvian experts respectively. The operation bore the code name Jungle. The SIS procured a house in 111 Old Church Street, Chelsea, for the centre's use. This is where the agents-in-training lived, and where they learned radio transmission techniques, codes and ciphers and other skills for use by spies. Field training (shooting, swimming, camouflage, hand-to-hand combat) was conducted in the country. The training concluded with a trek in Scotland, where the trainees demonstrated their skills to the instructors. The purpose of these exercises was to train professional SIS radio operators, and not partisans.

In late October 1949, a speedboat transported the first agents to the coast of Latvia. Here they were met by a unit of Forest Brothers consisting really of KGB agents under the collective name of Maxis. The Kurseme Forest partisans were led by KGB Major Alberts Bundulis. By autumn 1950, cooperation between the SIS agents and the KGB impostors was going so smoothly that one SIS man started giving the false partisans courses in radio operation, planning to send several of the most talented of them to be trained in London. Once, the SIS men chanced to meet a group of genuine Forest Brothers, which was eliminated several days later by the KGB.

The SIS continued its operations. They thought they had established close communications with the Latvian partisans; now they turned their sights toward Estonia. In the spring of 1951, an S-208 brought four new agents to the Venta estuary near Ventspils, including one false partisan sent to London by the KGB. The group included three Latvians and one Estonian with the code name Gustav, whose identity remains a mystery. Gustav was sent to Estonia with a Latvian agent without contacting the Maxis group, to contact the Estonian Forest Brothers. Unfortunately, the Latvian disobeyed his orders and marched right into a trap. Both agents were placed under KGB surveillance, and since the Estonian KGB was not ready to work with its "guest", it decided to arrest Gustav instead. On 24 April 1951, he left Latvia and headed for Estonia. A few hours later, his body was recovered from the River Ujava. Walking into an ambush that had been prepared for him, and realising his situation was hopeless, Gustav had managed to bite open an ampule of sodium cyanide. His suicide set the KGB's Estonian operation back by six months.

By the autumn of 1951, Alfons Rebane (code name Robert) had recruited and trained new volunteers to operate in Estonia. According to Rebane's in-

structions, the men were to be liaison officers between the Estonian Forest Brothers and the British. Rebane foresaw the creation of an underground organisation in Estonia modelled on the Defence League, with a membership of at least 20,000 men. They were to go into action at the outbreak of a new world war, which in 1951 seemed more than likely.

In 1951 the Estonian agents and one Latvian were taken from England to Hamburg. The team included Leo Audova (code name Ants) and Märt Pedak (code name Otto). The group that left Hamburg in late September on the S-208 speedboat was equipped with four radios, code books, forged documents, three automatics, six pistols, 2,000 cartridges and 150,000 rubles.

On the night of 29 September, the S-208, with its engine muffled, slipped into a small bay six kilometres from the Ujava lighthouse. The location was a blind spot for Soviet radar, and everything progressed as anticipated. The S-208 launched a dinghy named Lady Jane Russell, which took the men ashore. They were met by the Maxis Forest Brothers, one of whom was to return to London with a real SIS agent for training. The incoming agents were taken to the Maxis group's camp, where they were met by a false liaison officer from Estonia. The Estonian KGB was now plugged into the network.

In Estonia, preparations for the SIS agents were as thorough as they had been in Latvia. A number of false bunkers were built in the woods and equipped with all necessities. The operation was led by the experienced KGB specialists Jaan Mägi, U. Kask and Voldemar Rosin, under the full control of the leader "Karl".

The SIS agents in Estonia were not given a part in any other operations. They were fed information which they transmitted to London. Ants soon began to feel uneasy about his forced inactivity. He left the bunker with his weapons and radio transmitter and radioed messages to London, keeping their contents secret from the rest of the group. These actions alarmed the KGB and Ants was arrested. The KGB exposed its deception to Otto, who was forced to work for the Soviet security apparatus.

On 20 April 1952, new SIS agents came ashore in Latvia, including Eerik Hurma (code name Georg) with forged documents in the name of Georg Kuuse. Georg brought along 60,000 rubles, a wealth of supplies and blank Soviet passports. Georg was sent to live in Ants' bunker and placed under strict surveillance. In 1953, Heino Karkman (code name Albert) reached Es-

tonia by way of Latvia. On 1 November 1954, a motorboat picked up the double agent Juhan Luks on the coast of Saaremaa Island and took him to a boat waiting on the open sea. The same boat brought the new SIS agent Raimund Jantra (code name Harry) to Estonia. Luks was questioned for several days in London by SIS officers, who were unable to unearth anything suspicious. He underwent thorough training and was sent back to Estonia. On 20 April 1955, Luks landed in Estonia. The same boat carried the SIS agent Albert and the KGB lieutenant Olaf Jürisson back to England. By November, the KGB lieutenant, now code-named Harald, was back in Estonia, bringing supplies and instructions to "intensify operations". At the same time, another partisan sent to England by the KGB was being trained at the London centre. This Soviet spy, called Olev, had fought in Rebane's unit during the war, but subsequently agreed to collaborate with the security apparatus for unknown reasons. Soviet security took Olev to Bornholm Island, where he gave himself up to the Swedish authorities. Rebane soon contacted Olev, who told him that he had been brought to the West at Karl's orders.

The KGB's grand operation entered a crucial phase. Its final goal was not even clear to its local leaders, who seemed to be more interested in enticing some well-known Estonian public figure to Estonia and arresting him in Operation Trust. The KGB's general goals, however, were more ambitious: with the unwitting help of Baltic exiles, it planned to infiltrate Western intelligence centres, thereby allowing it to eliminate Western intelligence personnel in the Soviet Union. But success had made the KGB careless. In addition to others it had recruited, the KGB tried to recruit Heino Karkman for its own interests, but succeeded only in arousing his suspicions. Karkman had no proof to back up his suspicions, but he began taking notice of events while continuing to play dumb. He succeeded in dulling the KGB's vigilance and returned to London where he expressed his suspicions to Rebane, who had also become suspicious because the operation was going too smoothly.

They decided to get to work on the KGB officer in London, who then broke down and confessed to Rebane that he had been sent to England by the KGB to entice Rebane into a trap in Estonia. In a gentleman's agreement, Rebane did not immediately inform the British of what he had learned, and allowed the KGB man to return to Estonia. The game continued, but Rebane was now the hunter, stalking Karl, the leader of the KGB Forest Brothers.

In August 1956, Rebane accompanied Karkman to Helsinki, as if accepting the invitation brought by Luks to take a speedboat from Finland to Estonia or to meet somewhere at sea. Several months passed and winter arrived. Finally, Rebane informed them that he would not go to Estonia, but ordered Karl to come to Finland. Karl, however, did not dare to undertake such a risky venture.

The espionage game went on. Rebane continued to speak of his imminent return to Estonia, all the while making every effort to bring his own men out. However, the KGB became suspicious. Georg, who had tried to distance himself from the false Forest Brother group, was arrested. Jantra was pressed into collaboration with the KGB, but succeeded in outwitting them. He managed to convince them that he would be much more effective in London, and thus managed to get sent back to England at the request of Rebane, where he was expected to infiltrate the British intelligence services. The KGB had made a fatal mistake: Jantra remained loyal to Rebane and divulged the entire game in detail to the SIS. Jantra changed his name, worked for many years for British intelligence, and is currently in retirement in Great Britain.

By the end of 1956, the extent of the deception was clear. By this time, the SIS had evidence that the KGB had infiltrated the Latvian Forest Brothers as well. In December 1956 Rebane sent his final radiogram to Estonia, saying in no uncertain terms that the Estonian Forest Brothers had been infiltrated by the Bolsheviks. Operation Jungle had failed. Rebane went to live in West Germany. Heino Karkman, the man who had played such a key role in foiling the KGB's plans, became a sailor. However, the KGB was not inclined to forgive and forget, and on 14 April 1958, Karkman fell off a ship under suspicious circumstances, in the Swedish harbour of Köping, and drowned.

The British intelligence service was not the only one to be interested in Estonia during the postwar years. Swedish and, through them, American intelligence services started gathering information as early as the mid-1940s. For whatever reason, a new stage began in the operations of Swedish intelligence in 1947 and 1948. The Swedes exhibited a marked increase of interest towards information coming out of the Baltic states; the influence of the CIA was apparent behind this. Arkadi Valdin became a central figure in Sweden; his liaison with Swedish intelligence was K. Andreasson. In a house on Gimmerstavägen 24 in Älvsjö, near Stockholm, recruited agents were given thorough training. Swedish intelligence was not the only service to work with

Valdin. The British and the Americans also turned to him through Colonel Alfons Rebane. Contact with the Americans took place through the former chief of long-distance reconnaissance for the German general staff, General Gehlen, who worked in recruiting and training men from refugee camps on behalf of the CIA. Thirty agents, all of whom had been trained in Pullach near Munich, were sent to the Baltic as a result of General Gehlen's efforts. Gehlen had one minelayer and two speedboats at his disposal which made brief expeditions to deposit men on the small islands around Hiiumaa Island or on the south of Pärnu.

The first man sent to Estonia in this endeavour was Ernst (other sources say Endel) Mumm, who landed in Estonia in 1947 or 1948. Mumm (code name Nixi) landed safely and got down to work. In October 1948 a large group of men followed him: Harri Vimm (alias Villu), Johan Maltis (Joonas), and a man with the code name Susi. Their first attempt to reach the shore of Hiiumaa Island near the Osmussaare lighthouse in a speedboat piloted by Captain Albert Lilleberg was unsuccessful. The speedboat encountered a fleet of Russian border patrol vessels and was forced to return to its base on Ture Island. They managed to reach the shore on the third try, when they headed for Lohusalu Point. The men went ashore in rubber dinghies, crossed the border zone and headed inland. The group was due to contact the Forest Brothers led by Richard Saaliste in Estonia. All too soon, the Soviet security apparatus detected unfamiliar radio signals and a manhunt began.

Villu was supposed to contact the border patrol regiment commander, Major Paul Lilleleht, who had been hiding in Estonia for a long time, but encountered a document checkpoint and killed himself by biting an ampule of poison. The security apparatus had more luck with Joonas, who became discouraged due to a series of failures in his operations and gave himself up to the security forces. Along with Joonas, the security forces seized not only the radio transmitter but also obtained information on the third agent, Susi. Susi was placed under surveillance, surrounded by security agents posing as members of the resistance movement, and turned into an unwitting conduit for the Soviet security apparatus.

Meanwhile, Valdin thought that everything was going according to plan. Only Nixi sensed danger. Realising that the men sent to contact him had been compromised, he acted to save himself. With Valdin's mediation, another

team was sent to Estonia: a Lithuanian, and the Estonians Evald Hallisk (alias Habe) and "Ermo". The team landed on the Lithuanian coast and immediately came under surveillance. In fact, Soviet security had planned to wipe out the entire team right away, but in a battle with border patrol troops, the Lithuanian was killed and the Estonians escaped. Unfortunately, this did not save the Estonians, who were met by KGB Forest Brothers who took them to their base camp in Estonia. The men were allowed to operate freely for a time, to prevent Valdin from becoming suspicious.

The Soviet security apparatus devised a plan to deal a blow to "Western intrigues" in Estonia by imprisoning the entire team in one go. The security forces made extensive preparations, including field training and other such operations. It seemed that nothing could prevent the operation from succeeding.

On 2 September 1951 a boatload of new agents was expected to land at 11:30 p.m. The morning was beautiful, but by nightfall a storm began to gather. The situation was complicated by a forest fire that had broken out the night before. The men in the speedboat could not see the torch signals from the shore against the light of the fire, and went 1.5 kilometres to the south, directly towards the border patrol cordon guarding Matssalu Bay. Some got quite far, but they were simply too unevenly matched against the border patrols. The cordon commander Kozlov fell in the fighting, and many border patrol soldiers were wounded. All four of the Estonian agents – Lembit Ustel, Aksel Ports, Kreums and Friedrich Põld, who had escaped from Estonia in 1947 on the fishing boat *Meretuul* – perished.

For all practical purposes, this brought Valdin's operations in Estonia to an end. No more teams were sent. The entire operation shifted more and more into the Americans' hands. In the mid-1950s, the CIA's interest in the Baltic states increased. Fearing KGB infiltration of the British intelligence network, the Americans began preparing agents who were exclusively their own, without coordination with the intelligence agencies of other countries.

One of the best-known incidents in Estonia is the capture of the CIA agents Kalju Kukk and Hans Toomla in 1954. Kukk was recruited by the American intelligence service in 1953 in Casablanca and sent for training in Munich. After exhaustive grilling, Kukk (code name Karl) was taken across the ocean to the USA on 7 August 1954, where he received thorough training from American instructors at Fort Bragg in North Carolina. Two other men – Ants

and Artur (Hans Toomla) – underwent training with him. Some time later, the men were returned to Germany for supplementary training in radio communication. These actions indicate that the Americans had learned from the Britons' experience. They did not send Kukk and Toomla to establish communication with the resistance movement, but instructed them to work as genuine spies, tracking the movements and possible concentrations of Soviet forces, collecting information on events in the Soviet Union, obtaining documents, and other such activities. Kukk and Toomla were given the coordinates of some of Valdin's men. Their main liaison was to be the Swedish agent Nixi who had been sent into Estonia in the 1940s. Nixi (Ernst Mumm) worked in a car repair shop and ran a successful espionage operation, according to American intelligence assessments. He had recruited his own network of agents. As proof of their authenticity, Toomla and Kukk were given several items and half a photograph, of which Nixi held the other half.

On 7 May 1954, an unmarked transport plane took off from an airport in Frankfurt. Kukk and Toomla parachuted into southern Estonia near the village of Auksaar, moving into the village of Kergu by Vändra, where Toomla's mother Liis Toomla lived with his sister Helgi Noormaa. Kukk and Toomla were told to familiarise themselves with the situation in Estonia, recruit agents, and prepare to receive a larger group of operatives. Toomla's old friend Robert Hamburg was recruited in Estonia, with the code name Ats. Kukk and Toomla moved through the country and gathered information. On 30 June 1954 they made their first transmission. They felt confident and secure. Their only tense moment had been an encounter with document control on the Pärnu-Tallinn train, which passed without incident. The men had no idea that the KGB had launched an extensive search operation under Colonel Gavriil Starinov and was already on their trail.

In June and July Liis Toomla's farm was placed under KGB surveillance. Early in the morning of 11 July, they reported two cyclists riding towards the farm; shortly afterwards, a radio transmission was detected in the area. The ring tightened. Kukk and Toomla were unsuspecting, and so the KGB was able to ambush them as they returned to the farm on their bicycles. Kukk was taken prisoner. Toomla, reacting with lightning speed, managed to grab his pistol and mortally wounded KGB operative Lukyanov, after which he himself collapsed, fatally wounded. The KGB tried to set up a counterespio-

nage radio game to mislead the Americans with the help of the imprisoned Kukk, but Kukk refused to cooperate, protecting the identity of his network of agents in every way he could. Despite his efforts, the KGB tracked and arrested Ats. At a military tribunal held in February 1955, Kukk was sentenced to death and his agents to varying prison sentences. Nixi continued to vex Soviet intelligence, returning in the end across the Norwegian border back to England.

At the same time, the struggle in the Estonian forests was not completely over. The KGB had not succeeded in capturing all the Forest Brothers. At the end of the armed conflict, some emerged from the forests to live legally under assumed names, but most were exposed before too long. In one instance, Ants Aunvere, a man who was working as roads inspector in Kose in the Harjumaa district, was arrested for the partisan activity of his past. Some other former Forest Brothers were hunted and captured in Latvia.

Some men, however, continued to hide, refusing even an outward compromise with the authorities. Although these men were fully aware of Estonia's status in world affairs, they still refused to abandon the resistance. Perhaps we will never know exactly how many of these men there were. They were destined to die nameless on a forgotten front. Not until recently has the veil of secrecy begun to lift from the events of those days. The best approach is to give a chronological view of events about which we have information.

Early in 1964 newspapers carried the story of two brothers, Aksel and Arnold Ojaste, who had been in hiding for 19 years in the Jõgeva district. They were fully pardoned by the authorities after their voluntary departure from the forests. In May the same year, several newspapers printed an article about Jüri Keskküla, who hid in a secret room on a farm in the Paide district of Saaremaa Island for 20 years.

On 26 February 1965 the official Estonian news agency ETA reported on the imprisonment of the Forest Brother Raimond Mölder. On the initiative of the Ranna *kolkhoz* policeman Simson, a manhunt was launched in early 1965 in the Mustvee district for the "dangerous criminals and collaborators with Germany hiding themselves on the *kolkhoz* territory". Mölder was apprehended in this manhunt. He did not give up without a tough fight, seriously injuring two members of the manhunt squad. In 1967 the KGB seized Võrumaa district legendary Forest Brothers Hugo and Aksel Mõttus.

In the summer of 1974, the Soviet authorities in the village of Poka in Võrumaa stumbled upon a man who they thought was in hiding. The well-known Forest Brother, Kalev Arro, was killed in an exchange of gunfire. On 28 September 1978, KGB agents tried to arrest the last-known Forest Brother, August Sabbe, but failed. Sabbe resisted and drowned himself as he saw that there were no chances of escape. With the last Forest Brother gone, the armed resistance movement in Estonia was over.

The failure of the movement was not the end of the opposition. On the contrary, it created a strong base for opposition, giving the nation a tradition of resistance. The strength of a resistance movement depends above all on the resolution and spiritual strength of the nation itself. Although the West provided little help to the captive nations, their resistance movements persisted with remarkable tenacity. A new generation arose to replace the dead or imprisoned Forest Brothers, and continued to resist the occupying power with changing methods in the changing circumstances.

Operations of Western Intelligence Services and Estonian Refugees in Post-War Estonia and the Tactics of KGB Counterintelligence

INDREK JÜRJO

The German occupation marks the beginning of the postwar armed resistance of the Baltic peoples. The Baltic states occupied by Nazi Germany cherished at first the hope that Germany would restore their independence. Soon that hope was replaced by deep disappointment which led to the formation of an opposition, which was strongest in Lithuania. The better organisation and greater activity of the Lithuanian resistance under the German occupation supported the armed opposition to the new Soviet occupation in 1944, which was more extensive than the guerrilla movement in either Estonia or Latvia.

In Estonia and Latvia, where the German authorities were milder than in Lithuania, opposition emerged considerably later. On 13 August 1943 the Latvijas Centrala Padome (Central Council of Latvia) was founded, in the Riga apartment of the son of Latvia's first president, Professor Konstantin Čakste. Arturs Arnitis, an active member of the council, set up motorboat communication with Sweden. In March 1944 the National Committee of the Republic of Estonia was established. In April, however, several committee members were arrested. In July 1944 several Estonian refugees in Stockholm and Helsinki were co-opted on to the committee. Immediately prior to the second Red Army occupation, the National Committee served as the basis for the Estonian government, which was formed on 18 September 1944 and declared Estonia independent. The government was still unable to oppose the Red Army and could not rely on support from the Western Allies.[1]

In October 1943, as military success evaded Germany, an intelligence group called Haukka was formed to establish communication between the resistance forces and foreign countries. The nucleus of the group was composed of men from the Erna troop which, after training in Finland, had landed in Estonia in the summer of 1941. The Haukka group reached an agreement with Colonel Hallamaa, commander-in-chief of Finnish radio intelligence, and Commander Aulio. The Finns were to get from the group information concerning the Germans; in return they were to train Haukka members, supply them with

equipment and take care of their transport. Soon regular radio communication with Finland was established. The key figures in Haukka, Leo Talgre and Toomas Hellat, who worked for the German Abwehr under Commander Cellarius, were well disposed towards Estonia. On their initiative another group called Tümler was formed, which stayed in Estonia after the return of the Red Army. The members of Tümler were trained in German schools and their centre was in German territory. It was hoped that with the establishment of Tümler the reconnaissance centre in Estonia would become legal in the eyes of the German authorities and, thus, it would be possible to obtain equipment. In fact most of the plans were not carried out and contacts between Haukka and Tümler were weak.[2]

In the summer of 1944, Hellat went by Swedish launch to Stockholm with the aim of arranging further cooperation with Swedish intelligence. During his week-long stay he contacted the British Embassy intelligence officer, Alexander McKibbin, as well as the US Embassy secretary, Harry Carlson, who was in command of the American secret services in Sweden. It is believed that the Americans informed their ally, the Soviet Union, of the meeting.[3] Anyway, Soviet counterintelligence was well aware of the Haukka-Tümler men and in the autumn of 1944, after Estonia had been occupied again, began to persecute their leaders.

The evacuation of the members of the National Committee of the Republic of Estonia to Sweden was a fiasco. Due to an engine failure, the boat which was to take the committee members was late. A few of them did reach Sweden; the majority, however, together with the acting prime minister, Otto Tief, were arrested by the Red Army troops that had reached the Baltic coast.[4] Failures were in store for the Haukka group, too. After the Soviet-Finnish armistice, the Finnish centre sent a short notice to the Haukka men in October: "Your removal impossible, hide."[5] Later, contacts were broken off altogether. As part of the operation Stella Polaris, the Finnish reconnaissance officers who had been supervising the Haukka group were evacuated to Sweden. In Estonia the first Haukka-Tümler scouts were arrested on 6 November when Smerš spotted three men from Haukka in Viljandimaa: Erik Joonas, Tarmo Meristu and Helmut Pedanik. The arrests escalated as interrogations produced new evidence. On 5 and 6 December almost all the members of the Tümler group were arrested. On 10 December Soviet security captured Hellat who,

during interrogation, gave in and agreed to cooperate with the KGB. His confession enabled the KGB to find the rest of the Haukka men.[6] Finally, a week or two later, the leader of the Haukka group, Leo Talgre, was trapped in a flat in Tallinn and killed in a struggle.[7]

The interrogation of Hellat alone resulted in the arrest of more than 200 people by the Ministry for State Security (MGB); 23 radio transmitters were confiscated, ten conspirators' apartments and several secret crossing-places were liquidated.[8] Most of the Haukka men left behind in Estonia were either killed or sentenced to prison.[9] The news of the annihilation of the Haukka group did not reach the émigré community for a long time and they relied on the Haukka men in their intelligence operations for many years to come.

In the postwar intelligence operations of Baltic refugees two separate stages can be distinguished. In the first postwar years there were sporadic émigré efforts aimed at establishing contacts and sending assistance to the armed resistance in their homeland. There was no steady cooperation between refugees and Western intelligence services. In the second stage all intelligence operations were strictly directed by Western intelligence services, and their main goal was to obtain military information relevant for the Western side. Aiding armed resistance was not on the agenda of the Western intelligence services, and Baltic agents were instructed to avoid participation in guerrilla warfare.

KGB tactics also corresponded to the two above-mentioned stages. In the first stage the KGB concentrated mostly on the liquidation of the guerrillas and combined the obstruction of émigré reconnaissance operations with the anti-guerrilla struggle. An example of this comes from Lithuania where a mock organisation, the Supreme Committee for the Restoration of Lithuania (VLAK), was set up, which opposed the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK) which had been formed in exile. At the head of the mock committee was Juozas Markulis, a KGB agent whose aliases include Erelis and Noreika. With the help of Markulis, the KGB succeeded in arresting many Lithuanian guerrillas and disorientating the émigré community.[10] In Latvia the KGB used its agent Tankist (Marģers Vītoliņš)[11] who presented himself to Latvian guerrillas as a British spy. He succeeded in gaining the trust of Latvian guerrillas, and organised in Riga in October 1947 a "council" of their deputies, and 14 commanders of the Kurland guerrilla unit were arrested without a shot.[12]

In the second stage, the KGB deception operations with Western intelligence services, which had no direct relation to the actual armed resistance movement, were of major significance. By the end of the Second World War the KGB had extensive experience in the surveillance of refugees and in blocking the activities of Western intelligence services. The routine for deception operations had been fixed in the course of its intelligence operations. The secret professional literature of the KGB defines a deception operation (a so-called operational game – *operativnaja igra*) as a system of counterintelligence operations and actions, the aim of which is to ascertain the plans and intentions of Western intelligence services, to filter KGB agents into Western intelligence services and émigré centres, and to mislead them with wrong information. The precondition of a deception operation is the infiltration of Soviet agents into Western intelligence services and émigré centres (*podstava*). Arrested agents of Western services could be used if their arrest was still unknown to the other party, or they could be used as blinds, without the agents themselves being aware of their deception.[13]

The Cheka and OGPU deception operations Syndicate and Trust were precedents of KGB actions. These were fictitious anti-Soviet organisations, the members of which were in fact Chekists or their agents. They established contacts with bona-fide representatives of Russian émigré organisations who were related to Western intelligence, and gave them misleading information. With these operations Chekists bribed the active White Army figure Boris Savinkov and the British "super-spy" Sidney Reilly[14] to go to Russia.

During the Second World War, Soviet counterespionage carried out deception operations on the Germans.[15] After the war these were applied in western Ukraine and Poland. By the operation Cep, the KGB succeeded in taking over the communication channels between the Ukraine National Organisation and émigré centres and British intelligence.[16] A similar game was conducted by the KGB and the Polish security service, set up and trained by Soviet agents, which formed a fictitious national resistance organisation in 1948. The CIA was drawn in, too, supplying the "resistance movement" with arms, radio transmitters and gold, until in 1952 the KGB completed its deception with a derisive propaganda programme broadcast over Polish radio.[17]

The principles followed by the KGB in Eastern Europe and Ukraine were similar to those used in Baltic operations.[18] The KGB had many advantages

over Western intelligence services. Soviet intelligence was ahead in time, not to mention its considerably larger staff and almost limitless resources under the conditions of the totalitarian Soviet system. While the Western states throughout the Second World War had fulfilled their obligations as allies, avoiding any anti-Soviet espionage, the Soviet intelligence service, on the other hand, had made maximum use of the naive trust of Western politicians.[19]

After Estonia had been occupied by the Red Army for the second time, for some time Estonian refugees tried to maintain the motorboat communication with Sweden set up during the German occupation. This, however, became more and more risky, for immediately after the occupation of the Baltic states, the Soviet Union sealed its sea border as tightly as possible. In 1945 and 1946 these operations were directed in Sweden by the National Committee of the Republic of Estonia. Several leading figures in the émigré community had established contacts with British intelligence during the war. It seems that at first relations between émigré leaders and Western intelligence services were not close. Their aim was to establish communication links and support the armed resistance. Several boatmen, sailing from Sweden to Estonia, hoped to fetch their relatives left behind in Estonia. A few of these raids were successful, more often the boats had to turn back from the well-guarded coastline of Soviet Estonia.

According to KGB records, the overseas operations were controlled by the Foreign Board at the National Committee in October 1944. The board recruited agents from among the refugees with the aim of sending them to Estonia.[20] The link relied on the Haukka group to continue its mission in Estonia. Parallel to patriotic motives, several agents sent to Estonia also had personal interests in returning. On 2 June 1946, Elvi Ormus-Akman, Aksel Vahtras and Voldemar Päärson landed in Hiiumaa to give the Haukka members codes and a timetable for transmissions. They failed, of course, and on their way back to Sweden were captured by Soviet border guards.[21]

A more serious enterprise was the expedition by a lawyer, Rudolf Saago, and a fisherman, Arseni Sagur, which served the interests of both the Estonian National Committee and Western intelligence. Saago was known for his firm patriotic principles and had been wanted also by the German occupying authorities. Both Saago and Sagur were recruited by Jaan Ots and Endel Peedo (the agent Lepik) who were in contact with the British secret services. Saago was given a radio transmitter and instructed in how to use it. His task was to estab-

lish contacts with the Haukka-Tümler group, meet Estonian guerrillas, and to obtain documents and strategic military information. The latter was what British intelligence was mostly interested in. In the middle of the night, on 1 November 1946, Saago and Sagur landed on the coast of Saaremaa, and Saago soon moved on to Tallinn. There he found out that the group he was to make contact with had been arrested. Saago kept his cool; his old friend Enn Ennist from Tallinn agreed to help; Saago gave him a radio transmitter and codes. Ennist quickly recruited a whole group of supporters, including a radio operator. Saago and Sagur, considering their mission fulfilled, returned to Saaremaa where they expected a motorboat from Sweden to come and fetch them. The boat, however, could not get past the Soviet border guards and did not land.[22] On 13 December 1946, Soviet security arrested Saago and Sagur in Saaremaa and in the last few days of the year the KGB succeeded in seizing the whole of the Ennist group in Tallinn. Sixteen people were put on trial, Saago and Sagur were sentenced to 20 years of penal servitude, the other terms were shorter.[23]

As the 2nd Department of the MGB had known for years that the English and Americans had established an espionage school in northern Sweden to prepare personnel to be sent to the Baltic states, the KGB decided to begin a radio deception based on information gained from Saago and his imprisoned companions.[24] In the absence of an agent radio operator, it planned to transmit call signs to Sweden and initiate a secret correspondence with the Estonian National Committee in Stockholm. The operation had to be stopped, however, for the Swedish side did not answer. Probably the KGB timing was not good, independent émigré activities were coming to an end, while the Baltic operations of Western secret services were only at a very early stage.

The most conspicuous undertaking, and the most idealistic in its nature, was the landing of Richard Saaliste and five companions on the Kübassaare peninsula in Saaremaa on 2 December 1946, with the aim of establishing contacts between émigrés and the guerrillas as well as organising the armed resistance. During the German occupation Richard Saaliste had been the commander of the Hiiumaa Home Guards and fought in the border guard regiment as a company commander. After his arrival in Sweden he had been arrested for a short period and accused of being a Nazi. As the accusation proved to be groundless, Saaliste was released, yet his period of imprisonment only increased his determination to return to his homeland. On landing in

Saaremaa, his motorboat was damaged on rocks and the radio transmitter was lost. His group moved on to the mainland where the men divided. In August 1947 Soviet security arrested Martin Tammiksalu, Aleksander Krabi, Vassili Tarvis and Einar Nurk of the group; Paul Mutso was killed at the time of the arrest.[25] Saaliste, hiding by moving around, cooperated with the strongest guerrilla organisation, the Relvastatud Võitluse Liit (Union for Armed Combat). Although he managed to get a new radio transmitter from them, regular communication with Sweden was not kept up. Saaliste struggled for three years and was killed in action on 14 December 1949 by Soviet security.[26]

With Richard Saaliste the émigré attempts at active support of the armed resistance in Estonia practically came to an end. From this date espionage activities were conducted under the direct surveillance of Western intelligence services.

The major Western opponent to Soviet intelligence was the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). In July 1945 Harry Lambton Carr was appointed controller of the SIS Northern Area, including the Scandinavian countries and the Soviet Union. Carr's assistant in the SIS, the head of the "Nord" Department responsible for the Baltic states, was Alexander McKibbin. Both of them knew tsarist Russia. McKibbin had lived between the two world wars in Tallinn, being engaged in timber dealing and serving, at the same time, as a trusted informant of British intelligence.[27]

Totally different as to their characters, the reserved and suspicious Carr and the jovial McKibbin held in common an affection for pre-revolutionary Russia and a hatred of Communism. This hatred was what bound them to the Baltic refugees. They found it only natural that the numerous Baltic refugees in Sweden should be used for getting information about the Soviet Union; they recruited agents from among them and trained them with the aim of sending them back to the Baltic area as spies. The interest was mutual, for the refugees were hoping to use the material support of the Western intelligence services to aid and coordinate the liberation movement at home. Several leading figures in the Estonian community in Sweden had collaborated with British intelligence during the war. Sweden became the base where the SIS continued its Baltic operations after the end of the war. In the late 1940s, as allied sympathy for the Soviet Union was fading and the Cold War atmosphere was gradually setting in, an espionage school for training Baltic refugees was estab-

lished. Representatives of all three Baltic states were employed to recruit agents of Baltic origin who, under the direct guidance of Carr and McKibbin, were to conduct espionage operations. These included the Lithuanian professor of history, Stasys Žymantas, the Latvian Air Force officer Rudolfs Silarajs, and Colonel Alfons Rebane, decorated with the Knight's Cross, who had distinguished himself on the Eastern Front.[28] To the latter (at his own request) an assistant, Väino Pärtel was attached, who, using personal contacts, was to look for possible candidates for the school from among the former Eastern Front units.

The experienced KGB managed to entangle the Baltic operations of Western intelligence services in a web of deception. According to the classic principles of espionage, these games were isolated from each other so that one failure did not obstruct other operations or initiate new proceedings from the previous ones. All of these deception operations served one set of aims: to cut the contacts of Western intelligence services with émigré centres and the local resistance movement, to eliminate Western agents, to make use of infiltrated communication channels in the anti-guerrilla struggle, to spread among the émigré communities antagonism and misleading information, and to damage the reputation of refugees in the eyes of Western politicians.

It is impossible to make a comprehensive survey of the KGB deception operations, which were directed from the 2nd Department of the MGB, the Moscow counter-intelligence centre, as archives in Russia are not accessible. A short description of some can be found in the secret history of the KGB published in 1977; the Baltic operations Duel, Venta, Meteor and Lursen-S were mentioned.[29]

Using information in the Lithuanian Special Archives it is possible to get a more detailed picture of the major deception operations conducted in Lithuania, Volna, Les and Neman. Within the framework of these, between 1949 and 1952, the Lithuanian MGB received five British intelligence landings, in the course of which seven British agents were arrested and one killed. Of the arrested agents some were rerecruited and used in further counterintelligence operations. The radio game Neman was aimed at American intelligence and used the American agent Jonas Kukauskas, arrested in 1951. A special ten-man department to direct the deception operation was set up.[30] The Lithuanian security service used the classic counterintelligence device of the Cheka: a false underground resistance organisation. Based on the presidium of the Bendras

demokratinis pasipriešinimo sąjūdis (BDPS, General Democratic Resistance Movement) liquidated at the end of 1947, the Lithuanian KGB formed a deception organisation under the same name, using as agents former politicians, army officers, clergymen and other well-known public figures from the Lithuanian republic trusted by the émigré community. In order to camouflage the organisation in the eyes of the agents who were not aware of the others' collaboration with the security organs, the BDPS presidium now and then held real meetings. Lithuanian guerrillas did not trust the organisation, but the KGB succeeded in catching British agents with the BDPS, and confusing the Lithuanian émigré community.[31]

Of central importance in the KGB Baltic counterintelligence operations was the operation Lursen-S, conducted by the Latvian KGB.[32] The operation goes back to the attempts by the members of the Latvian Central Council to contact, from their Swedish exile, the resistance movement at home. In the evening of 15 October 1945 a representative of the Central Council, Arturs Arnitis, landed with some companions on the coast of Kurland. Unfortunately a wave turned their boat over and the Soviet border guards soon found their equipment washed ashore. Within a few weeks all four agents were arrested. Prior to his capture, Arnitis had set up the radio transmitter and informed Sweden of his arrival. The head of the Latvian KGB counterintelligence department, Janis Lukaševics, asked for permission to begin a radio game with the SIS. By the time the permission arrived, the four seized agents were physically so tortured by their interrogators that none of them could be used in deception any more. Only the radio transmitter and its ciphers were left.

Lukaševics remembered the Latvian radio operator Augusts Bergmanis who had been caught. He let him be released from the prison camp and within three months succeeded in convincing him to collaborate with the KGB. In March 1946 Bergmanis (now a KGB agent under the alias Drug) began transmitting to Sweden the Arnitis call signs.[33] After three months of patient waiting Stockholm answered Bergmanis' call signs and on 6 August 1946 British intelligence sent by boat to the Latvian port of Zveiniekciems two Latvian leaders, Rihards Zande and Eriks Tomsons, who passed the border guard unnoticed and disappeared inland. As Zande, following instructions from Stockholm, was to meet Bergmanis both agents were under the surveillance of

the KGB from November 1946. In spite of that, Zande was able to obtain valuable intelligence information so his radio transmissions to Stockholm were damaging to the KGB. In March 1947, General Vēvers of the Latvian KGB ordered the arrest of Zande and Tomsons.

A decisive step in drawing British and Swedish intelligence into the web was the work of the KGB agent Apogs, sent as a fictitious refugee to Gotland on 11 October 1948. Apogs was a former Riga student called Vidvuds Sveics who had had numerous contacts with the Latvian SS and Latvian Abwehr collaborators. Although seriously suspected, the member of the Central Council of Latvia Verners Tepfers, recruiting agents to be sent to Latvia (on McKibbin's request), proposed that Sveics join the group. Sveics was sent to the intelligence school in Lidingö where Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanians were also trained.[34]

Parallel to the SIS and in close collaboration with it, the Baltic republics were also dealt with by Swedish intelligence (T-kontoret) headed by Thede Palm. Baltic operations in the 1940s and 1950s were commanded by Curt Andreasson.[35] Swedish intelligence employed the former lieutenant, Arkadi Valdin, whose task was to recruit volunteers from among Estonian refugees. According to the agent Olaf Leola, arrested later, Valdin and a group of Estonians had travelled in 1946 by speed-launch between Sweden and Estonia without the knowledge of the Swedish authorities. In the same year the Swedes spotted the launch and Valdin was arrested. While in prison he was recruited by Swedish intelligence (under the alias Ats) and his task was to prepare agents to be sent to the Baltic countries.[36] Valdin began his work immediately and in October 1946 he recruited Harri Vimm (Villi) and the next year Endel Unt (Susi) and Joann Maltis (Joonas). They had all fled to Sweden between 1944 and 1945 one way or another and worked as labourers. In Stockholm the newly recruited agents were trained in radio transmission, ciphering and cryptography, which was practically all the quick and superficial training was limited to.[37]

Several unsuccessful attempts were made at sending the agents to Estonia. It was only on 15 October 1948 that the three spies were taken by silenced motorboats and landed near Lohusalu in northwestern Estonia.[38] The group, equipped with a radio transmitter, was to gather data and establish contacts with the resistance movement. Valdin intended to deal with the Haukka-Tümler organisation, but the contact addresses the agents had been given included those of Toomas Hellat and Ülo Jõgi, arrested long ago. After the

completion of his mission Valdin was going to take his men, and with them their wives who had been left behind in Estonia, back to Sweden. This was planned for the spring of 1949. After the landing, Maltis went to western Estonia while Unt and Vimm set out for Tallinn. The agents, with their poor training, were careless. They visited their relatives and friends, telling everybody that they had come from Sweden on a mission. Under the conditions of total control established in Estonia it was just a question of time before the unprofessional agents would be caught. On 22 October, a ranger whom Vimm had visited informed the authorities and on the same day the police arrested Vimm in the town of Sindi. After his interrogation, and with the information thus obtained, Unt was arrested in Tallinn on 28 October and Maltis on 18 November.

The 4th Department of the Estonian KGB decided to begin a deception operation with Swedish intelligence using the captured agents. First of all it had to make sure that their capture would remain a secret. For this 20 people who had met them were arrested and sentenced to penal servitude.[39] After a thorough interrogation of the agents the KGB initiated two loosely related radio games which were later entirely independent – Blind and Sever. Blind used Vimm; Sever, Unt; Maltis, who was considered useless in radio operations, was sentenced to 25 years. Both had their different codes, corresponding to the missions of the agents as given by Swedish intelligence. In Sever, Unt acted as a member of a guerrilla group gathering information. Blind presented Swedish intelligence with a story which depicted Vimm as working in the ranks of the underground organisation the Eesti Vabastamise Komitee (EVK, Estonian Liberation Committee). The non-existent organisation, backed up by detailed KGB data, presented to the émigré community active members of the opposition in the period of the Nazi occupation, like Harri Moora (Istorik) and Adam Randalu (Moskvin) and others.[40]

Harri Vimm planned to overtrump the KGB and escape at the first possible opportunity. He was naive enough to inform his cell agent of the plan, and the MGB Special Board sentenced him to death; he was shot. The radio game Blind, however, went on, for Swedish intelligence was presented over the radio with an account according to which Vimm had given his transmitter over to Unt, having tried to cross the gulf and reach Finland, during which he had probably been spotted and killed. The Swedes believed it and ordered Unt to

give Vimm's radio transmitter to the underground EVK. From then the radio games Blind and Sever proceeded entirely independently with no connection whatsoever. In between Valdin had managed to recruit three new Estonian agents, Igor Eplik, Endel Suuster and Evald Hallisk, who, together with Latvians and Lithuanians, were trained at the Lidingö school. The next Swedish intelligence operations were joint ventures with the British secret services; the latter had found a real professional to take agents to the Baltic area. This was Hans Helmut Klose, a man with Prussian military training. Klose, as the captain of an E-boat, had been cruising in the Baltic from 1944 until the end of the war, dropping German agents into the Soviet rear. The crew of the boat Klose had received from the British was recruited by him from his war-time comrades.[41]

In spring 1949, on the evening of 1 May, the Swedish and British secret services sent to Lithuania by Klose's boat a six-member espionage group, at the head of which was Jonas Deksnys who had been in Lithuania twice, completing his mission under KGB control without being aware of it at all.[42] The group included the Lithuanians Voldemaras Briedis, Kazimieras Pyplys, the Estonians Igor Eplik and Endel Suuster, and Vidvuds Sveics (the KGB agent Apogs). Rowing ashore in two rubber dinghies, the men disappeared into the forests, while Sveics, who had abandoned the group unnoticed, informed the local security bodies. Deksnys, Briedis and Suuster were arrested by agents of the Lithuanian KGB disguised as partisans. Eplik was to be arrested too, but was struck by the handle of a pistol so hard that he died on the spot. Pyplys escaped and joined the guerrillas. He was killed in 1952.

Briedis and Deksnys were recruited by the Lithuanian KGB which used them to deliver misleading information. Suuster was sent to the internal security prison in Estonia and he, too, was recruited. Using him as a radio operator, the KGB initiated a new radio game, Yavka, the aim of which was to strengthen the credibility of Blind and Sever in the eyes of Swedish intelligence.

The Swedes had no doubts whatsoever, and in the spring of 1950 a new group was sent to Lithuania, including the Estonians Evald Hallisk and Olaf Leola, and a Lithuanian known as Tomas. The Swedish secret service speedboat took them to Gotland where Klose's E-boat was waiting for them. In the night of 18 April Klose landed the men in Lithuania where they met with failure. Leola, in panic, went voluntarily to the MGB to report his arrival, Hallisk was arrested on 22 April and Tomas was killed in action. Even if they

had reached Estonia, they would have been captured there. Leola's task was to contact Unt, and Hallisk was to find Suuster in order to gather military, political and economic information under their guidance; by that time Unt and Suuster were both already in KGB service. Hallisk and Leola were moved to Estonia and engaged in KGB counterespionage operations. Neither of them was recruited, however (Hallisk would not have been able to be a double agent because of his nature and principles), and soon they were removed from the KGB deception operation. They both got 25 years of penal servitude; Leola, who was recruited as agent Kask, was released in 1956, Hallisk only in 1965.

The radio deception Sever was proceeding successfully: the Swedish secret service was informed that Endel Unt had participated in a guerrilla meeting in southwestern Estonia to discuss new tactics of guerrilla warfare.[43] Endel Unt received a radio message which informed him of the possible arrival of a new espionage group which was to land in northwestern Estonia; the Stockholm centre asked Unt to help them. The KGB planned to arrest them all immediately on their landing.[44] On 2 September 1951, the KGB was waiting for the Swedish group near the village of Nõva. They had warned the border guards and had warships waiting at sea so that the speedboat would be spotted as well. As the forests on the coast were burning, the boat landed a few miles away from the agreed spot; the border guard in its professional vigilance fired on them – although warned beforehand not to by the KGB – and a well-planned Chekist operation failed. In the skirmish all four scouts (Lembit Ustel, Aksel Pors, Friedrich Põld and Krums) were killed, as was the commander of the border guard post, Mihhail Kozlov.[45]

The dispatch of the four spies to Estonia was the last active enterprise of the Swedish secret service. The radio games, however, continued, which shows that Swedish intelligence believed for years in the successful mission of its agents in Estonia. The KGB planned to send agents to Sweden, disguised as representatives of the underground national movement, using the radio games Blind and Yavka; in Sweden they were to infiltrate the National Committee of the Republic of Estonia and find out the further plans of the Swedish secret service.[46]

The centre of British intelligence operations in the Baltic area was Latvia, where Estonian and Lithuanian agents arrived first. In the spring of 1949 Vidvuds Sveics, the KGB agent Apogs who had landed in Lithuania, moved on to Riga, contacting soon the British secret services over the radio and by

cryptograms. The English, believing in the success of their intelligence operations, landed two new agents in Latvia (Kurland) on 1 November 1949, Vitolds Berkis and Andrejs Galdins, brought there by Klose's E-boat. The men succeeded in landing unnoticed by the border guards but inevitably soon contacted the addresses provided by Sveics which were all, of course, those of KGB agents. Having consulted in detail Sergei Kruglov, Beria's deputy, the Latvian KGB began a grandiose deception named operation Lursen-S (after Captain Klose's E-boat), proceeding from Berkis and Galdins who had spent the winter under the surveillance of KGB agents and professional staff.[47] The operation, directed from the 2nd MGB Department in Moscow, also used Estonian and Lithuanian MGB forces. In Latvia it was commanded by the strategist Lukaševics and put into practice by Major Alberts Bundulis.

Berkis and Galdins told the KGB agents Sveics and Galdins that they would be followed by a wave of agents from Great Britain and the USA. This made the Latvian KGB broaden its game. A guerrilla community called Maxis was set up in the boggy forests of Kurland. Its commander was the energetic Major Bundulis. In addition, the group included Lieutenant Kazimirs Kipurs and five KGB agents, all of whom had mastered a behavioural pattern that was based on analysis of minute details, and a fabricated curriculum vitae.[48] In May 1950, after the snow had melted, the British agents were taken to the Maxis group where Berkis soon established radio communication with London.

Maxis was not the only body of this kind. Soon the Latvian KGB set up in Vidzeme an underground resistance organisation called Roberts including people with legal abode in Riga.[49] Such a combination as this of mock-partisan groups, living in bunkers built solely for the purpose of deceit, and false underground resistance organisations, including people living quite legitimately and well known, as a rule, to the émigré community for their patriotic principles, were presented to Western intelligence services not only in the radio games staged in Latvia; the Lithuanian and Estonian security bodies used them too (the equivalent of Roberts in Estonia was the EVK). Lursen-S, however, exceeded all the others in its duration and its extent. It comprised 65 to 70 people, 15 of them KGB staff. Lieutenant Kipurs spent longer or shorter periods in the Kurland forests over five years, living in cold, damp bunkers; guerrillas were played by other agents, and so it went on for years.[50]

Agents recruited from Baltic refugees were sent to London where the train-

ing was better than in Stockholm. Men received thorough instruction in radio transmission, deciphering and cryptography; they had to attend lectures on theory as well as practising their skills. The basic course in London was complemented by field exercises in southern England and Scotland.[51]

Soon the London instructors were also training KGB agents. Lukaševics succeeded in infiltrating into the school his agent List (Stanislavs Kreics), who had served the KGB for four years. In November 1950 the KGB staged his escape to Gotland where he presented himself as a member of the Roberts organisation. On 15 January 1951, List, persuaded by McKibbin and Silarajs, began his training in the London espionage school. McKibbin's expectations of Roberts were very high, he took it to be the headquarters of the resistance and the main underground force not only in Latvia but in the whole Baltic region.[52]

All proceeded in accordance with the KGB's plans and on 12 April 1951 Klose's E-boat dropped another four-member intelligence group on the coast of Kurland, including, this time, the agent List. In the next few years the Maxis group in Kurland functioned as a perfect transport terminal where British agents arrived and KGB agents departed for training in London.[53] The agents sent to England were the Latvian KGB agents Grosberg (Arvids Gailitis), Dubin (Janis Klimkans) and Tankist (Marģeris Vītoliņš) and the Lithuanian KGB agent Šilaitis.[54] In order to dispel the possible doubts of the London secret services, the Klose boat returned to England British agents who had stayed a long time with the Maxis group without the British suspecting that they were KGB officers and agents. One of them, Vitolds Berkis, participated prior to his return to London in the autumn of 1951 in the Kurland meeting of "guerrilla commanders" organised by Lukaševics. Partisans – KGB agents – accused the Western intelligence services of neglecting them. Berkis, under emotional pressure, promised to do his best in London to increase aid to the guerrillas.[55] The equipment, arms and money (3,235,920 Soviet roubles) sent to Latvia by the British secret service was received, of course, by the KGB.[56]

Several British agents of Estonian origin arrived, too, mediated by Maxis. Gustav, whose true identity has not yet been established, came on 12 April 1952 and moved on to Tallinn. As cooperation between the Estonian and the Latvian KGB was not good, Lukaševics decided to arrest Gustav. The arrest, however, failed for Gustav managed to swallow before his seizure a dose of poison and jumped into the River Ujava.[57]

Although Gustav perished, on 29 September 1951 some other Estonians, Leo Audova (Ats) and Märt Pedak (Otto), arrived. This time the KGB decided not to arrest them but to include them – without their knowledge – in the joint operation between the Latvian and Estonian security bodies which, by the Estonian side, was called Universiteet. This grandiose deception operation (with operations Sever, Blind and Yavka still going on with Swedish intelligence) lacked KGB staff and finances. On the application of the Estonian security service in the autumn of 1951, a seven-member department of the Estonian KGB, dealing solely with deception operations, was formed. The department worked under the direction of an officer from the 2nd MGB department who had come from Moscow.[58] Bunkers of guerrilla groups were set up in the Estonian forests and those who lived there were KGB agents. In February 1952 the British spy Otto was brought to one of these groups. In summer 1952 Leo Audova was moved to Estonia and put into a bunker; in April 1952 the British agent Eerik Hurma (Georg), who had first lived with the Maxis group, came.[59]

The long-lasting hunt for British spies and the maintenance of three mock guerrilla units soon exhausted the Estonian security services and it planned to arrest the agents. Before that, however, the agents were to prepare everything for the continuation of the deception: they had to recommend the "underground national resistance centre" to London, fix a place (this time on the Estonian coast) where new agents would be dropped, and train extra radio operators.[60] Eerik Hurma was arrested on 20 September 1952; on 21 January 1952 Soviet security was forced to arrest Leo Audova, who, out of idleness, had activated his intelligence mission. The Estonian KGB tried hard for six months to persuade Audova to collaborate in KGB counteroperations; he, however, as a Christian of firm convictions, refused to become a double-agent.[61] Both Audova and Hurma were sentenced to death and shot. With Märt Pedak (Otto), the KGB was more successful: he was recruited into its service and, thus, his life was spared. The last British agent to come to Estonia via Latvia was codenamed Albert.[62] Having arrived in Kurland in September 1953, Albert took a train to Estonia and stayed for a year and a half with a guerrilla unit used to receiving British agents.[63]

The deception operations with Swedish intelligence were continuing, exploiting the EVK fictional resistance organisation. As proposed by the Stock-

holm intelligence centre, on 16 October 1953 the KGB sent its agent Iokela (Valdur Loor), as a representative of the organisation, across the Norwegian-Soviet border. Iokela reached Stockholm and contacted Valdin and others at Swedish intelligence, as well as exile organisations, giving them a letter from an EVK leader, the agent Istorik, or Harri Moora, one of Estonia's best-known archaeologists. Iokela was told by the Stockholm centre to establish on his return a five or six-member espionage group in Estonia to gather and transmit information to Stockholm, and to prepare a station on the northern Estonian coast to receive spies from Sweden. Valdin, without the knowledge of Swedish intelligence, informed Iokela of the four hiding places where he could contact British agents in Estonia (they had been arrested by that time). In May 1954 Iokela was sent back to Estonia by special speedboat. Swedish intelligence advised him to keep in touch with the EVK, although not much was expected of this purely national organisation orientated towards passive resistance.[64]

The KGB, sure that the Swedish secret service had no doubts, began a new radio game, Mayak, in the name of Iokela. At the same time the KGB was not very interested in new radio games with Swedish intelligence, for the Swedes were believed to lack the resources to develop more active operations like the British or the Americans. Moreover, the Swedes neither trusted nor were interested in underground organisations in Estonia.[65] The KGB decided to intensify its involvement with British intelligence and to extend to them also the legendary EVK of the radio game Blind.

The British secret service, however, by now had its first doubts about the mission trusted in 1953 to the Roberts organisation. The SIS had asked the Roberts representative, the KGB agent List, to bring them a bottle filled with water from the River Tobol, on the banks of which it believed a nuclear reactor had recently been commissioned. The Moscow centre, probably in disorder after Beria's death, mixed the sample so high in radioactivity that it was deadly. The British secret services had every reason to suspect that it could not have been mixed by Latvian resistance fighters but by the KGB only.[66] The SIS decided immediately to call a representative of the Roberts group to London. On 29 September 1954 Klose's boat brought Kiel Marģers Vitolins (the KGB agent Tankist), who was met with a suspicion that no one tried to conceal. Although Vitolins, as a professional actor, got through the detailed interrogations, he was not able to dispel SIS doubts altogether.[67]

The "purity" of the British operations was also questioned by American intelligence which had hoped to use the Baltic area as its main channel in obtaining information about the supposed military build-up in the Soviet Union. The CIA tried to keep its operations isolated from the British ones. They did not drop their agents by boat but parachuted them. At first the Lithuanian refugees were most active in collaborating with the Americans, and so the first CIA intelligence groups were sent to Lithuania. In Lithuania and Latvia, however, the KGB soon succeeded in capturing the American agents; the CIA became entangled in the web of KGB operations which in May 1954 enabled the KGB to find the CIA training officer Leonids Brombergs who had been sent to Latvia.[68]

The US espionage operations in Estonia were modest. In the night of 6-7 May 1954, the agents Kalju Kukk (Karl) and Hans Toomla (Artur) were parachuted into Estonia. Both of them, having fought in the ranks of the Estonian Legion, were recruited by American intelligence in Sweden, trained near Washington and in Starnberg, West Germany. Their task was to collect information only, any contacts with guerrillas were to be avoided. British intelligence was not informed of this mission.

The KGB did not know of their arrival either, but radars picked up the violation of air space and the alarm was given to find the spies. At first Kukk and Toomla, who carried forged documents, were able to conceal themselves well; they established radio communication with the CIA and recruited collaborators. However, the KGB, knowing about the presence of the spies in Estonia, on 19 July 1954 located their radio transmitter and caught the men as they returned from their routine session. Hans Toomla aimed his pistol at a security officer, but himself was fatally wounded. Kalju Kukk was arrested and soon the rest of their partners were caught. In February 1955 the Leningrad Military District Tribunal sentenced Kukk, as an American spy, to death; the others were imprisoned.[69] After the failure of Kukk and Toomla there is no further evidence of CIA attempts to send their agents illegally to the Baltic region.

The British secret services still cherished the hope that it was only the Roberts organisation that had been infiltrated by the KGB. It decided to continue the Estonian operations, avoiding Latvia. The Estonian KGB, unfortunately, had prepared itself for direct contacts which, in the name of an underground group,

would mean receiving British spies and sending KGB agents to London. On 1 November 1954 agents were exchanged: Captain Klose dropped off on Saaremaa the British secret service agent Harry (Raimund Jantra), and the KGB agent Sulg boarded the boat. The arrival of Harry proves that the British still believed in the success of their agents in Estonia and believed the resistance groups to be genuine. Harry was taken to the mainland where he lived for three months under total KGB control in a guerrilla unit; he was arrested there on 8 February 1955.[70]

The KGB agent Sulg, presenting himself as Valter Luks, was interviewed thoroughly in Hamburg and London; London, as Alfons Rebane testified, believed in him and Sulg was sent for espionage training.

The Estonian KGB stepped up its deception of the British secret services, now within the framework of Operation Berkut. The arrested British agent Harry was recruited in 1955 by the KGB under the new alias Tiit. The London centre kept in contact with him and the agent Otto who had already been recruited by the KGB, and another KGB officer, introduced to the British in the radio game as Vello, a member of the resistance movement. The radio game was directed by another KGB member, the commander of a bogus underground resistance movement, known as Karl, who had his own cipher for London.[71] In the night of 20–21 April 1955, at the meeting place in Saaremaa, agents were exchanged once again. This time the majority of them were KGB agents. Sulg returned to Estonia from his training in London, the E-boat picked up the British spy Albert and the KGB agent Piilu who was presented as a guerrilla. Sulg brought to the Karl guerrilla unit 440,000 roubles, a radio transmitter, arms and other equipment.[72] Albert was returned to London in the conviction that, after his year and a half in a guerrilla bunker, his comrades were real resistance fighters, and would strengthen with his evidence the belief in London in the KGB operation.

In the same year the Estonian KGB attempted to approach the British secret services, using the deception operations conducted with Swedish intelligence. A split in the EVK organisation, established in the radio game Blind, into two wings was staged: the larger one, disappointed with the Swedish centre, seceded, aiming for the support of a more powerful Western state; the smaller and more moderate wing remained "faithful" to Swedish intelligence. The moderates were directed by the agent Istorik in whose name radio com-

munication with Stockholm continued; at the head of the radicals was the agent Obnovlyonnyi (later Otto), known in the émigré community for his fiery patriotism. The agent Talu (renamed Oleg) was sent to London as a messenger of the seceded EVK wing. During the war he had been commander of a platoon in the Alfons Rebane battalion. Just prior to his departure Talu met Obnovlyonnyi as a representative of the EVK and obtained from him letters to be handed over to the Estonian ambassador in Great Britain, August Torma, and the US consul general, Johannes Kaiv. In July 1955 Talu boarded a small motorboat and crossed the Gulf of Finland; via Finland and Sweden he reached England.[73]

The British secret services, however, by this time had serious doubts about its Baltic operations and the introduction of a new agent, used hitherto in another radio game played with Sweden, did not help the Estonian KGB much. Talu was interrogated thoroughly and confessed everything. His almost immediate surrender was partly due to the fact that he and Rebane had fought shoulder to shoulder on the front line: the KGB had overlooked this highly human factor.[74]

At first the British secret services decided to continue with the operation, hoping to discover the plans of the KGB and to get back their own agents. The SIS officers were in no hurry to report to their bosses on the total failure of the intelligence operation, which had been prepared for so long and so carefully. Talu was pro forma trained in espionage, and on 20 October 1955 the British officer Scott sent him back to Estonia. British intelligence gave him contact addresses to use in sending ciphered letters, and letters from Rebane and Torma to give to Obnovlyonnyi, proposing that the latter send to London a minister plenipotentiary to take part in negotiations. Now the KGB web was disintegrating on all sides, for, unexpectedly to the KGB, Obnovlyonnyi (Otto) veered at this meeting towards treason and warned Talu (Oleg), whom he probably thought to be a genuine resistance fighter and contact of the British secret services, that he was a KGB agent.[75]

The example of Obnovlyonnyi, collaborating reluctantly with the KGB and tortured, probably for years, by pangs of conscience, serves as a good illustration of the circumstances in which the KGB recruited high officials of the former Republic of Estonia and well-known figures in public and cultural life.

The pseudonym Obnovlyonnyi conceals the identity of the officer of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomat George Meri (1900–1983), who in the 1930s had worked in the Estonian embassies in Berlin and Paris. On 14 June 1941 his family was included in the mass deportations. In Sevurallag Meri was reported to have belonged to the Baltic underground organisation that was planning to escape from the camp, cross the front line and defect to the German side. A decree by the NKVD Special Board of 28 February 1942 sentenced Meri to death; he, unlike the others, was not executed, by personal order of Beria.[76] Meri saved his life in return for secret collaboration with the security authorities, which he performed, at first, as a cell agent. On 20 October 1945 he was released by application of the 2nd Department of the Soviet NKVD, and began service as the agent Obnovlyonnyi,[77] participating in radio games. During the slightly less tense atmosphere of the Khrushchev thaw, Meri tried to shake off his role as agent and came under KGB surveillance. Estonian KGB counterintelligence, in order to arrest Meri, was planning to send an agent provocateur who would present himself as a contact of the British secret service.[78] This plan, however, was not carried out, but Meri's surveillance was continued.

In spite of all the failures, the Estonian and Latvian KGB hoped to continue their deception operations in the mid-1950s, unaware that the British secret services had known the truth for some time already. The prospects for getting the Baltic agents back to London were poor. In theory they could have been exchanged for KGB agents in London, but in the atmosphere of relaxing tension, following the death of Stalin, Western politicians tried to avoid tokens of active anti-Soviet espionage.

The SIS stopped all its operations in Latvia and Lithuania. The Maxis group, requesting a speedboat to come and fetch their representative, was answered with a refusal, and on 22 June 1956 Silarajs sent Maxis the last SIS message informing them about the termination of communications.[79] Lukaševics made a last desperate attempt to continue the operation, and on 2 July sent an agent Klimkans (Dubin) to be dropped on a beach in Gotland. Klimkans, although well tested before, yielded to his interrogators in London and confessed to the English. The British secret services never tried to use him to get back their agents, and in November 1956 Klimkans was taken to the Soviet Embassy in Stockholm.[80]

In Estonia the British operations did not halt so abruptly. It could have been partly because of the pressure Alfons Rebane exerted on the British officers who had not abandoned all hopes of exchanging men.[81] In the summer of 1956 the British secret services agreed to take back the agent Piilu, by a British boat which was to land on the southern coast of the Gulf of Finland. In return, the SIS asked the KGB to send back its agents Otto and Harry. As Otto knew too much of the operations, the KGB refused to let him out of the Soviet Union, yet it agreed (under pressure from the British) to send back Harry. The Estonian KGB was hoping to continue their deception and did not want to irritate the British with a refusal. The KGB did not take it as an exchange of captured agents but tried to make the rerecruited British agent a true agent who would serve their interests in London.[82]

The exchange of agents was not as smooth as was planned. In the night of 29–30 August 1956, Piilu landed on purpose 31 kilometres off the agreed point on the north coast of Estonia and was stopped by the border guard. The Estonian KGB was still convinced that the operations would proceed and that soon the British would send new agents. Harry was engaged once again and on 5 September 1956 was sent by motorboat to Finland. During the following months Harryi, who had immediately informed the British secret service of his recruitment, sent a few radiograms from London, thus fuelling the KGB hope that he was fulfilling his mission. In the second half of December 1956, however, the security organs in Tallinn were hit by the London message which said that further contacts with the Karl group would be cancelled, for the Latvian organisation had been uncovered.[83] Against the expectations of the Estonian KGB, the British side had stopped the game.

The next year the KGB made a few attempts to contact the London centre, which must have seemed hopeless even for them. In May 1957 the Karl group sent a cryptogram to England. In July of the same year the agent Kalur (the rerecruited British agent Otto) tried to contact British intelligence over the radio, sending a ciphered text to Rebane. All these were answered by London with silence.[84]

With Swedish intelligence, less interesting for the KGB, the radio games were being gradually wound down. The radio game Blind, as one with no purpose, was stopped in February 1956 by transmitting within the Mayak operation the lie that the EVK radio operator had died after a surgical op-

eration.[85] The radio game Sever was continued in the name of the agent Muru until 31 June 1956 when the KGB leadership sanctioned its cancellation by silence. This operation, too, had no clear object.[86] It was decided to end the Mayak operation with a propaganda campaign compromising the reputation of the adversary. In 1957 a series of articles called "Falling Leaves" was published in the magazine *Ogonyok* and the daily paper *Noorte Hääl* about the Swedish espionage conducted by G. Grišin and A. Normet in Estonia, relying partly on facts but also including abundant deliberately misleading information. The exposure was preceded by a note from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, dated 5 March 1957, accusing Sweden of sending agents to the Soviet Union, mentioning the names of a few arrested agents. The Swedish Foreign Ministry denied all the Soviet charges of espionage made against Sweden. By this absolute denial of any intelligence operations the Swedish side cut off all possible diplomatic channels that would have enabled them to alleviate the fate of the Baltic agents.

After the failure of the Baltic operations McKibbin was made the scapegoat and forced to retire from the British secret services without any remuneration. All Baltic intelligence officers who had participated in the operations were fired, too. Only Carr, the general director of the operations, was spared, and a comfortable though insignificant post was found for him.[87]

With these drastic staff changes the British secret service itself summed up the failure of its intelligence policy in the Baltic states during the Cold War. The KGB, in turn, estimated its Baltic counterintelligence operations to be an undisputed victory, which was shown by the promotion of the KGB officers who had participated in these operations. Janis Lukaševics was promoted to general; he was posted to London in 1972 where he stayed till 1980. Elmar Vertman, the commander of the special department responsible for deception operations, carved out a career for himself too, and became director of the 1st Department of the Estonian KGB (foreign espionage).

The intelligence war in the postwar Baltic area has been interpreted in different ways.[88] It is evident, however, that the KGB operations with the British, Swedish and American secret services achieved all their major goals in the general context of Soviet counterintelligence. Western agents were spotted and several possible lines of communication were broken. Western intelli-

gence services were forced into futile actions for years, thus paralysing their possible aid to the armed resistance movement. A comprehensive picture of the intelligence operations in the Baltic countries during the Cold War cannot be obtained yet, for the sources are scanty and partial. The KGB archives in the possession of the Federal Security Service of Russia and the archives of Western secret services are not accessible to researchers.[89] However, if there are agents who succeeded in fulfilling their mission and returning to the West, they must have acted outside the operations described above.[90]

Deception operations between the KGB and Baltic refugees did not come to an end immediately. Using the agent Istorik, the KGB tried to pursue certain goals in the operations Blind and Mayak. In November 1957 Istorik arrived in Stockholm at the invitation of the Swedish Academy of Sciences and met several leaders of the Estonian émigré community.[91] The KGB attempted to recruit Arkadi Valdin and Alfons Rebane, sending its agents to meet them in Sweden or England. Alfons Rebane was invited to cooperate as late as 1964 when he could have met Soviet representatives at the Innsbruck Olympic Games. Rebane, however, prudently crossed off the Olympic Games from his schedule.[92]

As the Cold War was replaced by the Khrushchev thaw, the West wound down its active anti-Soviet intelligence operations. The easing tension and the atmosphere of negotiation would have been awkward for Western politicians had there occurred any failure on the part of the secret services. In order to obtain strategic military information, the West reorientated towards high-altitude flights over Soviet territory and later satellite intelligence, which the Soviet side used too. In the somewhat more liberal atmosphere that followed the death of Stalin, Western intelligence services, as well as Baltic émigrés, relied more on tourism and other forms of legal communication. These were answered by the KGB with new types of deception operations which cannot be reviewed – at least in the case of Estonia – because of the scantiness of archive records. There is no sense in trying to guess which side was more successful here, the only thing that is clear is that these actions were not as widespread or as bloody as the Cold War operations, which had plenty of victims and which almost entirely cut contacts between the armed resistance in the Baltic states and the refugees who had succeeded in fleeing to the West.

[1] Alvin Isberg, *Zu den Bedingungen des Befreiers. Kollaboration und Freiheitsstreben in dem von Deutschland besetzten Estland 1941 bis 1944.* Stockholm 1992, pp. 130-141

[2] Ülo Jõgi, *"Erna" legendid ja tegelikkus.* Tallinn 1996

[3] Ibid, p. 194

[4] Helmut Maandi, *Eesti Vabariigi Rahvuskomitee ja Otto Tief. Looming* 1988, 10, pp. 1380-1404; Otto Tief, *Mälestusi aastaist 1944–1954. Akadeemia* 1990, No 2, pp. 231-250; Külli Niidassoo, *Eesti Vabariigi Rahvuskomitee.* Tartu 1995 (diploma thesis)

[5] Ülo Jõgi, op cit, p. 187

[6] Toomas Hellat's detailed confession, written by his own hand, is in his inquest file kept in the Party Archives, a branch of the Estonian State Archives (Eesti Riigiarhiivi Filiaal, ERAF): F. 129, file 24585. After his arrest he was used as a cell agent with the alias Haakla. His 20-year penal servitude was rescinded, antedated in July 1955. In 1956 the KGB even planned to use the intelligent and specially trained Hellat, fluent in languages, as its agent in Sweden. The idea, however, was droppped. ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, file 358, p. 64; file 372, pp. 83-84

[7] The dates proposed for his death are December 17 or 24. Cf. Ülo Jõgi, op cit, pp. 205-206. A KGB testimony confirms that Leo Talgre was spotted in Nõmme Street in Tallinn on 17 December. He managed to fire two shots, wounding his captor Baranov who, in turn, killed him with a burst of gunfire. ERAF, F. 129, f. 24585, p. 62

[8] ERAF, F. 138, cat. 1, f. 20a, p. 90

[9] Ülo Jõgi, op cit, pp. 203-216

[10] Dalia Kuodytė, *Lietuvos rezistencijos ryšiai su Vakarais. Genocidas ir rezistencija,* 1997, 2. Vilnius 1997, pp. 38-45. Summary: *The Resistance of Lithuania and the West,* p. 45

[11] Marģers Vītoliņš was recruited by the KGB during the years of independence, in 1936. His first code name was "Gri". His file comprises nine volumes. Data from the KGB agency register are kept at the Documentation Centre of the Consequences of the Totalitarian Regime in the Republic of Latvia

[12] Latvijas Republikas Totalitarisma Seku Dokumentašanas Centrs, *Spravka po materialam arhivnogo dela "Lursen-S" (operativnaya igra s angliiskoi razvedkoi, provodivštšayasya KGB Latviiskoi SSR v 1948-1954 g.g),* p. 9

[13] *Kontrrazvedyvatel'nyi slovar'.* Moscow 1972, p. 114; A.A. Fabrichnikov, V.I. Myško, *Antisovetskie emigrantskie organizacii za rubezhom i rabota protiv nih.* Moscow 1972, pp. 135-136

[14] Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, *KGB. The Inside Story of its Foreign Operations from Lenin to Gorbachev.* London, Sydney, Auckland, Toronto 1970, pp. 93-106

[15] Pavel Sudoplatov, *Specoperacii. Lubyanka i Kreml v 1930-1950 gody.* Moscow 1997, pp. 238-250

[16] According to KGB data, in four years more than 40 British agents and the Ukraine National Organisation representatives were captured, some of whom were used in new operations

[17] Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, op cit, pp. 387-389

[18] A more thorough review of KGB deception operations in the Baltic countries is in Indrek Jürjo, *Pagulus ja Nõukogude Eesti. Vaateid KGB, EKP ja VEKSA arhiividokumentide põhjal.* Tallinn 1996, pp. 77-150

[19] Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, op cit, pp. 270-340

[20] ERAF, F. 138, cat. 1, f. 20a, pp. 78-79

[21] ERAF, F. 129, f. 26235

[22] ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 109, p. 8

[23] ERAF, F. 130, f. 13034 (six-volume investigation file and Saago and his accomplices)

[24] ERAF, F. 138, cat. 1, f. 20a, p. 88; F. 131, cat. 1, f. 109, pp. 63-64, 156-157, 202

[25] ERAF, F. 138, cat. 1, p. 20a, p. 94

[26] See: Mart Laar, *Metsavennad.* Tallinn 1993, pp. 105-126; Mart Laar, *Suurim armastus.* Stockholm 1994

[27] See: Tom Bower, *The Red Web.* London 1989

[28] Ibid, pp. 110-111

[29] *Istoriya sovetskih organov gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti.* Moscow 1977, pp. 466, 473. In the book a few other treatments of the KGB deception operations have been referred to; these, however, I have not had a chance to obtain. V.Y. Baryšnikov, D.P. Tarasov, *Radioigry.* Moscow, VŠ KGB 1964; Y.Y. Vevers, *Obzor operativnoi igry s amerikanskoi razvedkoi (po arhivnomu agenturnomu delu "Meteor").* Moscow, izd.

VKŠ KGB 1969; Y.V. Uzlov, Y.I. Smirnov, *Obzor operativnoi igry "Duel" po delu "Zapadniki"*. Moscow, izd. VKŠ KGB 1971

30 The deception operation Les has been recorded in as many as 20 files. Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas (LYA), F. K-1, No 45, s. 354-373. Summary descriptions of the most important operations are in Lithuanian MVD accounts compiled in 1953. LYA, F. K-1, cat. 45, f. 363, pp. 13-104

31 The use of the BDPS organisation in Operation Les has been described by the Lithuanian KGB officer Jonas Augucevičius in his 1958 report presented to the KGB High School research centre. LYA, F. K-1, cat. 45, f. 375

32 The 103-page secret report *Spravka po materialam arhivnogo dela "Lursen-S"* compiled by KGB Major General Janis Lukaševics, Lieutenant Colonel N. Larionov and Major Kazimirs Kipurs. Latvijas Republikas Totalitarisma Seku Dokumentašanas Centrs (further *Lursen-S*); cf. Janis Vasilevskis, *Ginkluoti tautinio pasipriešinimo junginiai – SSRS (Latvijos SSR) ir Didžiosios Britanijos specialiųjų tarnybų operatyvinių žaidimų terpė (1945–1956). Genocidas ir rezistencija*, Vilnius 1997, No 2, pp. 89-96. Summary in English: *Armed National Resistance Units – the Medium of the Games of the SSSR/Latvian SSR and Great Britain Special Operative Services in 1945–1956*, p. 96

33 Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 61-62; *Lursen-S*, p. 7

34 Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 98-99

35 See: Peter Kadhammer, *KGB ger Hallisk rätt – nu måste Sverige betala hans lön. Expressen*. 22 March 1994. Jonas Deksnys, arrested in April 1949, writes in his confession that the Baltic intelligence operations were commanded by Captain Ore Liljenberg, his assistant was Curt Andreasson, radio espionage was directed by Captain Hunelsson, Latvian and Estonian agents were recruited and guided by Verners Tepfers and Arkadi Valdin. LYA, F. K-1, cat. 45, f. 425, pp. 256-257

36 ERAF, F. 129, f. 25333, p. 53

37 ERAF, F. 130, f. 10544, p. 205; cf. Mart Laar, op cit, Tallinn 1993, p. 197

38 See: the report by KGB Lieutenant Tõnson, task commissary of the 7th Division of 4th KGB Department on radio games against Swedish intelligence compiled in about the mid-1950s. ERAF, F. 138, cat. 1, f. 18, pp. 24-53; F. 131, cat. 1, f. 261, pp. 255-261

39 ERAF, F. 138, cat. 1, f. 18, pp. 37-42, 47-49

40 ERAF, F. 138, cat. 1, f. 18, p. 24

41 Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 101-103

42 See about Deksnys: Liūtas Mockūnas, *Pavargęs herojus. Jonas Deksnys trijų žvalgybų tarnyboje.* Vilnius, No 2, 1997

43 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 261, pp. 2-10

44 Ibid, pp. 99-101

45 ERAF, F. 138, cat. 1, f. 18, p. 27

46 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 261, pp. 153-155

47 Tom Bower, op cit, p. 115

48 *Lursen-S*, p. 18

49 Tom Bower, op cit, p. 140; *Lursen-S*, p. 25

50 *Lursen-S*, p. 102

51 See: Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 111-112; a detailed description of the London training is in the written confession by Leo Audova, caught later: ERAF, F. 129, f. 4390, vol. 1, pp. 142-181

52 *Lursen-S*, pp. 26-30; Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 139-140

53 The participation of both British and KGB agents in Operation Lursen-S has been charted by Janis Vasilevkis in *Ginkluoti tautinio pasipriešinimo junginiai*, p. 95

54 Liudvikas Šimonėlis, the former Lithuanian officer recruited by the MGB in 1946. LYA, F. K-1, cat. 45, f. 358, pp. 46-50 (KGB report on the agent Šilaitis)

55 *Lursen-S*, p. 38

56 A list of the equipment is in *Lursen-S*, pp. 101-102

57 Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 141-143; *Lursen-S*, p. 31

58 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, p. 161, pp. 136-141; F. 130, f. 15534, p. 255

59 ERAF, F. 129, f. 4390, vol. 2, pp. 60-62, 306, 331; cf. Mart Laar, op cit, p. 194

60 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 261, pp. 194-196

61 ERAF, F. 129, f. 4390, vol. 2, p. 331

62 Albert's identity is hard to establish. From printed sources it could have been Heino Karkmann; a few people, however, having known him at the London espionage school, deny this

63 *Lursen-S*, pp. 72-73; ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 347, p. 81

64 *Otchet o rabote 2-go Kontrrazvedyvatel'nogo otdela Komiteta Gosbezopasnosti pri SM ESSR.*

Za period s 1/IV-1954 g. po 1/IV-1955 g. Tallinn 1998, pp. 72-76

65 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 358, pp. 56-57

66 Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 175-176

67 Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 173-177

68 Ibid, pp. 160-163, 168-169, 177-180; *Lursen-S*, p. 69; see also: Henriks Strods, *Latvijas nacionālo partizānu karš 1944–1956.* Riga 1996, pp. 481-483. Unfortunately the picture drawn by Strods remains sketchy; moreover, he is wrong in supposing that Brombergs was the one who informed the KGB of Kim Philby. Philby was at the time the SIS contact-officer at the CIA in Washington but had no detailed information on the Baltic operations so their failure cannot be blamed on his treachery

69 ERAF, F. 129, f. 18379 (the eight-volume investigation file of Kalju Kukk and his colleagues); *Otchet o rabote 2-go Kontrrazvedyvatel'nogo otdela Komiteta Gosbezopasnosti pri SM ESSR. Za period s 1/IV-1954 g. po 1/IV-1955 g.* Tallinn 1998, pp. 26-30; cf. Mart Laar, op cit, pp. 199-201

70 ERAF, F. 130, f. 1921

71 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 347, p. 81

72 Ibid, pp. 81-82

73 *Aruanne Eesti NSV Ministrite Nõukogu juures asuva Riikliku Julgeoleku Komitee 2. vastuluureosakonna tööst 1955. aastal.* Tallinn 1998, p. 8

74 It is possible that the British agent Albert had penetrated the KGB deception while in Estonia and had informed the English about it. Alfons Rebane in his letter to Hjalmar Mäe (25-26 October 1960) wrote that there was another Estonian in the London espionage school who was a KGB collaborator and had confessed it (the Hjalmar Mäe archives in the Institute of International Law at Salzburg University). Lukaševics, defending the honour of Latvian security officers, blames the failure in the eyes of the British secret services on the Estonian KGB only, mentioning in his historical survey two Estonian agents who confessed in London to collaboration with the KGB. *Lursen-S*, p. 97

75 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 358, p. 58; *Aruanne Eesti NSV Ministrite Nõukogu juures asuva Riikliku Julgeoleku Komitee 2. vastuluureosakonna tööst 1955. aastal.* p. 9

76 ERAF, F. 130, f. 145, vol. 1, pp. 25-26

77 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 372, p. 24

78 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 370, pp. 26-27; F. 372, pp. 24-26

79 *Lursen-S*, pp. 95-96; Tom Bower, op cit, p. 186

80 Ibid, pp. 187-189

81 Rebane has described his heated debates with the British officers in his letter to Hjalmar Mäe of October 25-26, 1960. Hjalmar Mäe archives

82 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 361, pp. 50-52

83 Ibid, p. 53, Raimund Jantra, living in England up to now, was later wanted all over the Soviet Union. *Alfavitnyi spisok agentov inostrannyh razvedok, izmennikov Rodiny, uchastnikov antisovetskih organizacii, karatelei i drugih prestupnikov, podlezhaštših rozysku.* Moscow 1969, p. 448

84 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 375, p. 55

85 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 358, p. 58

86 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 361, p. 54

87 Tom Bower, op cit, pp. 185, 190

88 Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky (*KGB* ... pp. 386-387) stress that the KGB, because of the rigid nature of the Soviet system and maniacal secrecy, could not make use of all the possibilities offered by deception operations; the effect was purely propagandist, compared to the SIS more resources were wasted. The latter is quite hard to comment on, for although the intelligence operations were costly for the KGB, it received enough money and equipment for them

89 The official Swedish statement (which can be seriously questioned) declares all the intelligence documents destroyed.

90 Former SIS agent, Voldemar Kiik was parachuted in spring 1952 into Estonia where he gathered information and returned in the autumn of the same year across the Soviet-Finnish border to the West. His mission, known of by oral statements only, was successful for he acted in isolation from other British operations in Estonia. At present he lives in England

91 ERAF, F. 131, cat. 1, f. 372, pp. 73-74

92 Letters from Alfons Rebane to Hjalmar Mäe, 2 and 16 February 1964. Hjalmar Mäe archives

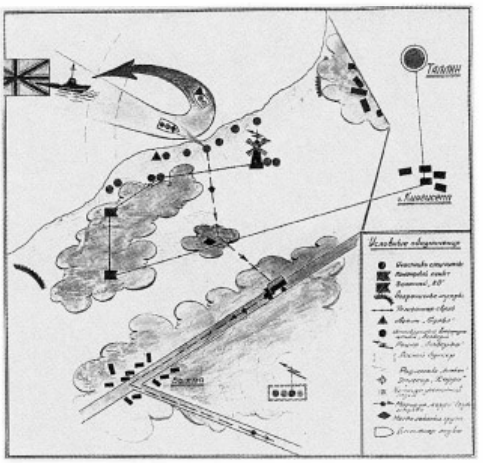
Partisans in the summer of 1941 (Kõue district, Harju region)

A Home Guard platoon in August 1941 (Mõniste district, Võru region)

A Home Guard unit near Tallinn in August 1941

The men of Tartu Partisan Battalion in July 1941

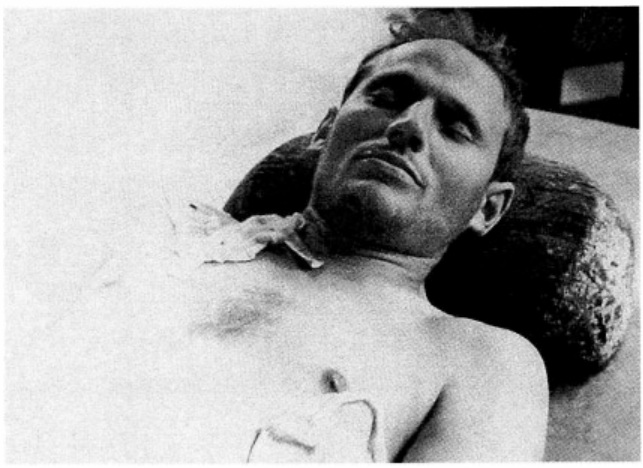
Equipment brought by the agent Harry



The landing plan for the English ship which was to take the agent Harry to Estonia on 28 October 1954

Kalju Kukk, the CIA agent Karl

Raimund Jantra, the British secret service agent Harry



Hans Toomla, the CIA agent Artur

CONTRIBUTORS

LITHUANIA

VALENTINAS BRANDIŠAUSKAS
Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, Programme Coordinator

NIJOLĖ GAŠKAITĖ-ŽEMAITIENĖ
Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, Programme Specialist

JUOZAS STARKAUSKAS
Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, Programme Coordinator

ARVYDAS ANUŠAUSKAS
Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, Department Director

DALIA KUODYTĖ
Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, General Director

ARŪNAS STREIKUS
Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, Programme Specialist

LATVIA

JURIS CIGANOVS
Latvian War Museum, Head of the National Army History Department

VINETA ROLMANE
University of Latvia

HEINRIHS STRODS
University of Latvia

ESTONIA

TIIT NOORMETS
Estonia State Archive, Research and Publication Department, Advisor

MART LAAR
Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia

INDREK JÜRJO
Branch of the Estonian State Archives, Head of Department

Pasaulini apie mus
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